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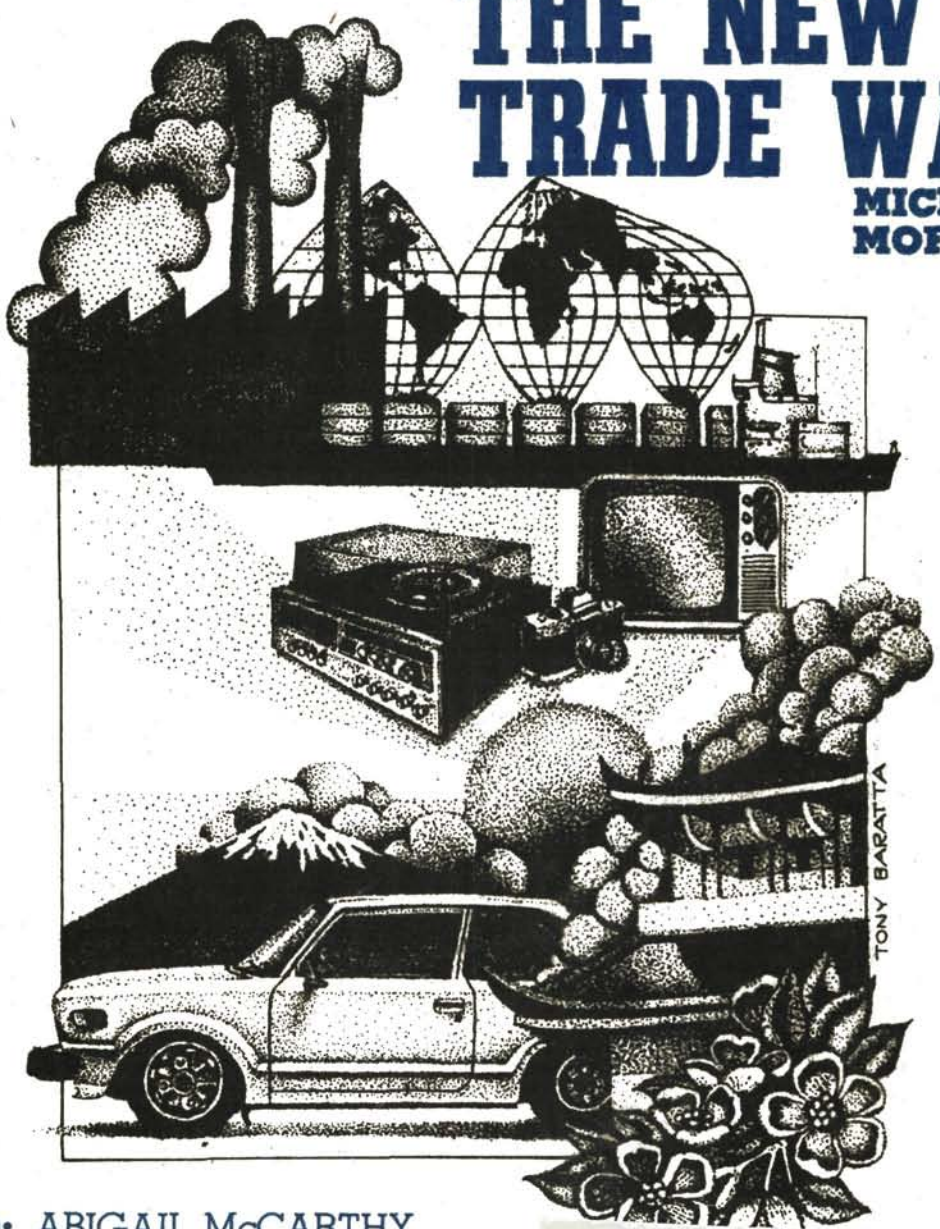
commonweal

THE NEW TRADE WAR

MICHAEL MOFFITT



ALSO: ABIGAIL McCARTHY, FRANK GETLEIN, DESMOND O'GRA RAYMOND A. SCHROTH, THOMAS GERALD WEALES, COLIN L. WESTE McCABE, ROBERT L. KING, GERARD ROBERT PHILLIPS and JAMES R. KELLY

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NEWS & VIEWS

6,000 Issues Young

The *Church Times* published its 6,000th issue recently with a wry look at itself and the Church of England, whose activities it has recorded for the past 115 years.

There was a wry look as well from *The Times* of London, which generally liked what it saw, notably the fact that the *Church Times* was no longer "bitchy about Rome."

"Its blinkers, if it has any, are those worn by the Church of England at large," said *The Times*. "Most conspicuously, it has yet to discover the Christianity of the rest of Europe except for the outlying Anglican chaplaincies of the large continental cities.

"Ecclesiastically, the Strait of Dover is still as wide as it was in 1863, when George Josiah Palmer, founder of the paper and great-great-grandfather of the present editor, first took up his pen and dipped it in acid."

Ironically, the anniversary issue of the *Church Times* appeared at a time when there is talk of launching a new weekly newspaper, one that would be distinctly Anglo-Catholic in the tradition of the old *Church Times*. Sponsors of the project have both money and influence behind them, and are ready to act, it is reported, because they consider the current *Church Times* unsafe on certain points of doctrine, "notably the ordination of women."

They would like to move back in spirit if not in time to July, 1926, when, on hearing that a woman was to speak in Liverpool Cathedral, the *Church Times* remonstrated:

"The service is informal, but the innovation is none the less regrettable. It will, of course, be approved by the lay press and by Noncomformists, but it is a break with Catholic tradition, and if it were generally imitated there would certainly be increased difficulty in reunion, not only with Rome but with the Orthodox East.

"There can be no place for unauthorized eccentricity in a body that claims to be an integral part of the Church Catholic. Perhaps in the future the scope of the ministry of women may be widened, but for the moment it is definitely defined, and thus it must remain in all parts of the Catholic Church until the church, speaking with unchallengeable authority, itself decides on change."

Church Times, 1926, sounds like Rome, 1978.

More Closings

The decline in parochial-school enrollments appears to be bottoming out, and parochial schools aren't closing the way they were a few years back. Indeed, there's indication that parochial schools are on the comeback and that padlocks may come off some schools that were shut tight for lack of students, support and faculty.

But the picture isn't rosy across the spectrum of Catholic education, including on the college and seminary levels.

Immaculata College of Washington, a two-year Catholic women's institution staffed by the Sisters of Providence, has announced that it will close in June due to financial problems. It will become the 24th Catholic college to have closed in the U.S. since 1970.

And though seminaries may not be closing at the moment, and though some religious groups report that they are attracting generous numbers of candidates, the vocations picture remains dark.

In fact, Bishop Kenneth J. Povish of Lansing, chairman of the U.S. Bishops's Committee on Vocations, is quoted in the April *Columbia* as saying that the "crisis" in religious vocations will get worse before it gets better.

"The big crunch will come in seven or eight years," Bishop Povish said in an interview, "and it may be devastating."

"Priests in their later years are retiring and, because of the overwork, priests in their prime now are going to be slowing down."

"This is true not only for priests, but for Sisters and Brothers, too," he commented.

The vocations problem is not unique to the U.S. In England, St. Mary's College, a seminary of the Holy Ghost Fathers which sent hundreds of priests into the African missions over the past 70 years, has been shut and is up for sale for $400,000.

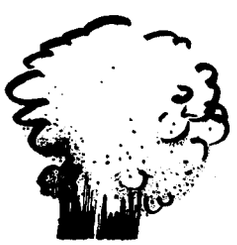
Its end came from heavy maintenance costs and a drastic drop in enrolees. At the end there were only a few boys of high-school age attending St. Mary's.

The Nuclear Club

You can't tell the players without a scorecard, so the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* updates us on the lineup of Nuclear Club. As follows:

1—Nations that have exploded an atomic bomb or device: U.S., USSR, England, France, China and India.

2—Nations with nuclear-weapons capability: Formosa, Israel, South Africa, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Italy, Japan and West Germany. (This group is divided into those with incentive to develop bombs, and those with no incentive to develop bombs. Placed in the first category: Formosa, Israel and South Africa.)



3—Nations capable of making a bomb within five years unaided, or less if aided: Argentine, Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, East Germany, Egypt, Greece, Iran, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Yugoslavia.

That's a chilling number of players.

Father Knows Best

A Catholic press question-box column we never finished reading . . . .

Father Clement D. Thibodeau's in *The Church World* (Portland, Me.):

Q. Our parish priest is causing serious problems concerning our forthcoming wedding. What can we do about this? (*Lewiston Readers*)

A. The first thing you could do is decide that he is right! . . . .

Odds and Ends

— In what seemed a breakthrough of sorts, the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal of the U.S. issued a statement affirming that "the gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of salvation for both men and women." However it added that it "did not believe a consensus has emerged thus far which would indicate a clear and unique approach to the roles of men and women in leadership and ministry within the prayer group setting." This followed 20 months of consultations.

— The American Venereal Disease Association is tub-thumping for members at $22 a head. Membership includes a subscription to *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*. Alas for the AVDA, its most likely prospects—creatures down in Kentucky blue-grass country—wear blinders.

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Roman Dinosaurs

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: Although I am not a Roman Catholic I have always held a great deal of respect for that Church and John Tracy Ellis's "The Place of History" [Jan. 20] gives some confirmation to my feelings. One expects and hopes that Rome is flexible enough to prevail through the times we are always in. I remember that Gregory gave Augustine a lot of latitude when he arrived in England where there was already a brand of Christianity. And when we were still one. There are indigenous customs expressed through Roman Catholic liturgy and belief wherever one goes.

On the other hand, I cannot but feel that Rome operates on a certain level of expediency from a bureaucratic point of view. The work of the great and strong individuals cited by Monsignor Ellis is not always reflected by the Church, but one expects that when it is expedient the Church will move. For that reason I expect that women will be ordained by the Roman Catholic Church much sooner than the rhetoric would lead one to think.

But, there is another possibility and that is that if the hierarchy continues to try to impose its religious beliefs on secular society, the Roman Catholic Church will not endure. Strong political action against family planning, abortion, birth control, etc., can backfire and undo so much good that has been done.

We all have our dinosaurs.

(THE REV.) WILLIAM B. GRAY

Ordinary Humbug

Lexington, Ky.

To the Editors: It is both amusing and sad to see one large talent chide another in the matter of sensibilities (Powers on Wolfe, "The Lives of Writers," Mar. 3) because it usually

(*Continued on page 255*)

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THE LEBANON INVASION

Events in the Middle East crash over one another like waves in a storm, each building behind the last, then submerging it. Sadat's peace initiative was sinking beneath the issue of Israeli policy toward the West Bank. Then the anticipated confrontation between Begin and Carter was suddenly swept aside by the bloody Al Fatah raid. Stunned by that event, the world has only slowly been assessing the Israeli response of a massive sweep into southern Lebanon. Hard upon that came the stony confrontation between Begin and Carter, and some would add between the administration and the organized U.S. Jewish community. The edge of the conflict shifted again—from military strikes to political jockeying, jockeying between America and Tel Aviv, Israelis and Israelis, Americans and Americans, Tel Aviv and Cairo. Is it possible to weave together the outrage provoked by the PLO raid, the distress and sorrow stirred by the consequences of Israel's invasion, and the fine calculations demanded by the political pressures and counterpressures into anything resembling a clarifying and peace-making attitude? At least a few things can be said.

First, the invasion of Lebanon cannot be judged in terms of the PLO raid alone. Menachem Begin did not serve his cause well when he spoke of punishment, no matter how understandable the Israeli's emotional response. Even worse was loose talk by others of "revenge." The raid was not an isolated event, but the expression of a hostile force occupying neighboring territory. All nations claim the right of self-defense against such forces, though they may not always choose to exercise it or only exercise it when, as in this case, a dramatic conflict makes their situation clear to the world. Any judgment on the proportionality of the Israeli response must

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be made in the context of the underlying, protracted struggle between Israel and the PLO.

Certainly the operation was a strategic success. The PLO has suffered a major military setback, whatever its claims to the contrary. In addition sensitivities appear to have been quickened in some Middle East quarters to the problem of the PLO's existence in Lebanon. If Lebanon does not have the strength to act effectively in imposing a control over the PLO, then Syria, which has 30,000 soldiers stationed in the country, does and may be disposed to, if only for its own self-interests.

On the negative side there is no doubt but that the Israeli invasion has added another difficulty to the strained peace negotiations with Egypt. And although the Carter administration was careful not to intrude on the invasion decision nor criticize it once placed into execution, the invasion may also have added to the strain between the Carter and Begin governments, if only by pointing up the warrior disposition residing yet within Begin. The instinctual adoption of force did nothing to reinforce hope that a more pacific attitude had descended on Tel Aviv. Israel can at least reduce this impression by getting out of the invasion area as fast as possible and leaving to the UN peacekeeping force the responsibility for insuring that southern Lebanon is not returned to a staging area for military and terrorist strikes.

The temptation to linger until the area is further secured will be strong for Israel, but territory has become Israel's Tar Baby, entrapping it politically even as it holds out the doubtful promise of military security. Already there is a subtle shift in American opinion —more sensed than documentable—that makes Israel the sole impediment to peace in the Middle East. No impression could be more unfair to Israel, nor more unfounded so far as the facts are concerned. It would be a tragic irony if Israel, by some tactless actions of its own, put itself under the cloud that belongs over the PLO and its backers.

Yet Israel could do this to itself, not only by shortsighted decisions with respect to Lebanon—a decision, for instance, to maintain a permanent or semi-permanent military presence there. It can hurt itself as much or more by persisting in the hard line it has adopted in the negotiations with Cairo. The intransigence of Begin, specifically in his interpretation of UN Resolution 242 relating to territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 war, is disheartening. His interpretation is unfounded. It is also unrealistic, for it is inconceivable that Egypt or any other Arab nation will accept as a negotiating starting point an ideological position measurably tougher than that of the previous Israeli government.

For this reason, Washington is well advised to place Begin under pressure to see UN Resolution 242, if not as Washington would like, then at least the way the former Israel government did. Bringing pressure on Begin is not going to help Carter's popularity in the U.S. Jewish community, which for some time has been nervous about his Mid-East policy. But—and this is important—to pressure Begin is not to diminish commitment or concern for Israel. A number of Jewish leaders are known to be privately alarmed over the hard-line positions taken by the Begin government in response to the Egyptian peace initiative. To urge flexibility on Begin seems in fact the best service one friend could do another at this difficult moment.

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FROM ROME

CHINA WATCH IN THE VATICAN

P'i-Shu-Shih who? The question was inevitable once it was known that Archbishop Ignatius P'i-Shu-Shih of Mukden, Fengtien and Shen-Yang and Bishop Ciang-Chia-Shu of Shanghai were participating in the fifth National Peoples' Congress in Peking.

Bishop Ciang-Chia-Shu was elected by the Association of Patriotic Catholics in 1960. He is not recognized by the Vatican whose Year Book lists Ignatius Kung Pin-mei, 76, as Bishop of Shanghai, adding "imprisoned for the Faith."

Nothing is known of Bishop Ciang. Bishop P'i-Shu-Shih, however, is in interesting case. Consecrated as archbishop in 1949 just before the break between Peking and the Vatican, in 1962 he presided at the second National Assembly of Patriotic Catholics, those who were prepared to collaborate with the regime. He consecrated seven bishops not recognized by the Vatican.

In the 16 years since 1962 nothing has been heard of Archbishop P'i-Shu-Shih. But now, at 81, he represents a link with the pre-Mao church who seems acceptable both to the Chinese leaders and to the Vatican.

Of course the Vatican, when better informed, must assess his behavior. But in its dealings with the church in East Europe it has accepted some bishops who collaborated with the Communist regimes.

Several bishops expelled from China acknowledge that there are worthy priests among those who were illegitimately but validly consecrated as bishops. Their status would be reassessed if Vatican-China links are resumed.

In 1958, Pope John spoke of the Chinese church as "schismatic" but Pope Paul has avoided this ex-

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pression and, moreover, for more than a decade has made it clear that he wants to reestablish contact with mainland China. A reliable source claims that Chinese authorities, after repeated requests, have finally agreed to discuss religious liberty in China in April with a lay Catholic who will be the Vatican's unofficial emissary.

At the time of the Communist takeover, there were over three million Chinese Catholics and about 3000 Chinese priests. It is thought there could be up to 20 pre-Mao bishops still alive. There is sporadic indirect contact with some of the estimated 115 surviving Chinese Jesuit priests. Visitors occasionally bring reports of other Chinese priests.

But the position is very obscure and the first Vatican request will be for contact with Chinese Catholics. Interestingly enough, Archbishop Giuseppe Caprio, who replaced Giovanni Benelli as Substitute Secretary of State last year, was No. 2 in the Vatican nunciature in Peking at the time of the Communist takeover. Presumably he knows P'i-Shu-Shih who was consecrated archbishop in the same month, October 1949, that Mao came to power.

After expulsion from China, Caprio worked in the nunciature in Taiwan. Vatican relations with Taiwan are an obstacle to diplomatic contact with Peking but not, it is believed, an insurmountable one.

For five years, there has been only a Vatican chargé d'affaires in Taiwan and the new political and cultural, as well as religious, tolerance which the Chinese regime is showing suggests breaking relations with Taiwan may not be a condition for reestablishing them with Peking.

Various groups, such as the Pro Mundi Vita research center in Brussels, have been studying how to present Christianity to post-Mao China. The Vatican's Congregation for the Evangelization of People has a group of experts at work on the same subject.

These is widespread awareness that, if contact is reestablished, the church should avoid any "spiritual invasion of China." It has to be more Chinese than in the past.

Nothing much can be planned, of course, until contact is made with contemporary China and Chinese Catholics: study groups can be misleading as they are always working with out-of-date information. But it is expected the most effective Catholic witness will be from the Catholic overseas Chinese if they return to China as technicians and professional people. There are over 700,000 Catholics among the 22 million Chinese spread through Southeast Asia.

The Jesuit superiors of the Order's Asian province met in Melbourne in January to discuss, among other things, coordinating help to these Chinese Catholics of the diaspora. The Jesuits discussed the hypothesis of the Bamboo Curtain against the church being raised by 1987. The invitation to two Catholic prelates to the Peking People's Congress suggests the time scale may have to be shortened.

DESMOND O'GRADY

WASHINGTON REPORT

HERITAGE OF FEAR

Franklin D. Roosevelt could not have known how right he was, how prophetic, when he told his countrymen they had nothing to fear but fear itself. He was talking about the Depression and it is true that paralysis through fear might well have kept the economy depressed indefinitely. It is also true that in fact the country had quite a few other things to be legitimately fearful about, as it shortly discovered in the news from Europe and Asia. Putting aside the national fear of the Depression and, presently, of the "wave of the future" in German and Japanese militarism, FDR led a newly confident country to victories over everything in sight. Roosevelt died, the war ended and it was only then that the wisdom of his words and the direness of his prophecy became manifest. In the full flush of victory, in a new, much more widely shared prosperity than previously experienced, America became fearful again and out of that fear betrayed its own ideals, the Constitution, its own soul.

That fear and that betrayal are the subject of an exhaustive, depressing and essential new book by David Caute, *The Great Fear* (Simon and Schuster, $14.95). Caute, a British scholar and writer, is an authority on the Left in Europe over the last two centuries. Here he recounts a story of the right, in the words of his subtitle, "the anti-Communist purge under Truman and Eisenhower."

In the hazy or selective memory most of us are burdened with, we think vaguely that the anti-Communist purge was caused by Senator Joe McCarthy and put to an end by Eisehower after McCarthy attacked Ike's hero and mentor, George Marshall. We think, too, that the purge was pretty much confined to State Department bureaucrats and to movie people, an improbable combination probably brought together simply by shared vulnerability. Likewise because both McCarthy and the infinitely more damaging anti-Communist charlatan, Richard Nixon, attacked Truman and his Secretary of State—"Dean Acheson's cowardly college of Communist containment," was Nixon's keen analysis—we tend to misdate the purge and leave Truman and Acheson out of it when in fact it was they

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who initiated it in the government, as they initiated anti-Communist wars in Korea and anti-Communist chicanery and shenanigans in the CIA.

Truman and Acheson did not, of course, go into their anti-Communist seizure without cause, both foreign and domestic. At the end of World War II, the Soviets did indeed hang onto the East European countries they had conquered from the Nazis, abolishing three formerly independent states altogether, seizing great hunks of land from others and putting all those nations—plus, later, Czechoslovakia—under Quisling Communist rule backed by the Red Army. Then there was the "loss" of China to Mao's armies, misperceived as agents of the Kremlin. In spite of the example not only of China but more flamboyantly of Tito's Yugoslavia, Truman and Acheson could not accept the possibility of independent Communist countries. Taking Soviet propaganda at its own word, they, and many of their countrymen, believed that all Communists were Soviet-directed, that the obvious aim of the movement was conquest of the world.

Probably even more compelling in Truman's thought was the alarming fact that anti-Communism was a hot issue in domestic politics. Nixon won first a House seat then a Senate seat by lyingly labeling his opponents as pro-Communist. His example was followed by a whole troupe of political mountebanks taking office on the promise to keep Josef Stalin out of the public schools. Like any intelligent politician, Truman tried to defuse a politically dangerous issue by occupying at least some of the territory of the opposition.

Once launched in government, the security review program moved rapidly into private business. In fact, it became a private business and a highly profitable one for a number of the sleaziest opportunists ever to make money out of national confusion here or elsewhere. Federal bureaucrats were far from the only or even the most savagely affected. We know about the script writers and directors of Hollywood. In his book, Caute examines cases that seem to go right across the board of American occupations. Librarians were naturally vulnerable to an anti-Communism that was inescapable anti-literacy as well. Teachers at all levels were similarly vulnerable—the title "college professor" was a dirty word in many minds—as were scientists, union leaders and advocates of just about any socially ameliorative measure including, perhaps especially, the extension of Constitutional rights to black people. Garbage men and street sweepers were hauled before boards to defend their political views. In the atmosphere of the time, it was entirely likely that we would shortly become a totally "secure" country in very much the style that Russia is.

In the entertainment world, the ravages were by no means limited to the Hollywood "Ten." Dozens of other creative people were driven from their jobs. The purge also turned to newspapers and television with complete success in broadcasting, all too much in print. An occasional publisher was willing to stand up for the First Amendment, but no broadcast executive has ever been accused of moral courage: such a trait in such a job would probably be grounds for dismissal.

Finally, of course, the hysteria played itself out. No one, either an individual or a nation, can live gasping indefinitely. Inevitably, too, the movement produced a burlesque of itself in Joe McCarthy, although it was never without its burlesque figures, including J. Parnell Thomas, who ended up in the Danbury exercise yard alongside one of his victims, Ring Lardner, Jr., on the familiar felony of anti-Communists, a certain carelessness in the cash box, a "co-mingling," as one of them called it, of funds public and funds private.

But of course, it hasn't played itself out at all and this is the most depressing thing about David Caute's horrifying recital. The "Great Fear" manifested itself in purges under Truman and Eisenhower, but the anti-Communism behind the purges and the fear has by no means been cured by the national understanding that the purges were much more effectively anti-American than they were anti-Communist. The anti-Communism that gave us the purges and Korea has continued to dominate American policy and American thought about policy.

The blandness of the 1950s, so widely denounced in the 1960s, is an obvious response to the lesson of what happened to non-bland people in the purge. I would not suggest a cause and effect relationship, but it seems to me unavoidable that one, let us say, encouraging condition for the rise of abstract expressionism as a major American art form in the 1950s was the professional memory of the persecution of artists who painted or wrote works that by whatever strain of meaning could be called "Communist" by some kook or crook in the anti-Communist industry. Beyond the 1950s, of course, anti-Communism gave us the catastrophe of Vietnam, the tragic farce of Watergate. If there is indeed something that can be reasonably called "Koreagate," it, too, is the creature of American anti-Communism.

And all of this, we simply ignore. We have had an FBI burglarizing American homes, a CIA reading Americans' mail, have suffered a disastrous war and are now, this minute, bankrupting ourselves on arms expenditures, all in the name of anti-Communism and somehow it never occurs to anyone that maybe it's time we seriously re-examined the premises of this doctrine that has proved so costly in money, wasted lives, the erosion of our own principles, the corruption of our government.

It's time.

FRANK GETLEIN

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ISRAEL WAS WRONG

RAYMOND A. SCHROTH

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon was wrong. The more frankly we face this the sooner we will be able to put the pieces together in the Middle East.

As the immediate, bloody human and long-range political consequences have made all too clear, the misnamed operation Stone of Wisdom was neither a morally justified response to the previous week's Palestinian terrorist Tel Aviv bus hijacking that left 35 Israeli dead, nor a politically justified policy decision that had a chance of bringing us closer to peace and justice in the Holy Land.

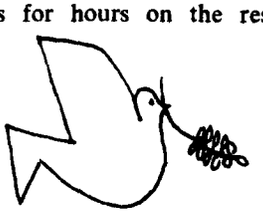
Indeed, on the psychological and personal, as well as military, level, it seems that the Israelis have played into the terrorists' hands. They have accelerated the insane cycle of violence with a fanatical reply to a fanatic's crime. They have delivered a few more crippling blows to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's and the United States' peace initiatives and, by so overwhelming the enemy, posed questions about the real seriousness of the PLO threat and the wisdom of Israeli leadership.

Certainly the terrorist leaders foresaw the Israeli massive retaliation and cared little more for their own people than for the Jews. Three-fifths of their armed forces had already melted away before the Israelis attacked. For the time being they had achieved what they wanted—war—and in a few weeks or months they will strike again—from the sea, or the air, or in downtown Jerusalem. And once again, if he is still Premier, Menachem Begin will revert to his own terrorist past and swear revenge. And if he strikes, another Palestinian mother will shout to reporters, "Write, write, tell the Israelis I still have two sons and they will grow up to take revenge."

But revenge ranks with its brother hate as the most corrupting human emotion. "The shedders of innocent blood shall not go unpunished," Begin vowed to his Knesset. But whom was he going to punish when the bus hijackers had already been captured or killed? Having denied his motive was revenge because "there cannot be any retaliation or retribution for the blood of innocent citizens," he launched an invasion that, like Lyndon Johnson's bombing of North Vietnam, had been planned for some time and which shed far more blood of innocent citizens than any just sense of proportion could allow.

In recent months terrorist attacks from the Lebanon border had virtually stopped. The Tel Aviv hijackers had come from the sea. Since 1970, according to Israeli Embassy figures, Palestinians had killed 258 Jews. (B'nai B'rith has calculated 1131 killings in ten years.) But, during the same time, Israel had killed over 2000 Arabs in retaliation.

Two weeks ago the Israelis came in with a juggernaut of 5000 men plus tanks, artillery and U.S.-made warplanes—Skyhawks and Phantoms—indiscriminately dropping 1000-lb. bombs for hours on the residential sections of the port of Tyre and leveling half the town of Uzai, a suburb of Beirut. Within four days they had killed over 700 people and, by the end of the war, created 265,000 refugees.



North of Tyre an Israeli commando team stopped two cars on the road and gunned down 18 men, women and children. As the *Washington Post* reported on March 25, Israelis have devastated Lebanon the way the U.S. devastated Vietnam, using tactics that made a mockery of their claim that the air raids were "surgical" strikes. And a Moslem refugee told a *New York Times* reporter: "We can't even count the dead. We are just leaving them behind and running. A year and a half ago I ran from Qaaqaiye to Qsaibe. Now I am running to Beirut. Is there no conscience in the world?"

Immediately after the attack news reports said Begin's bold action had strengthened his political position at home. Now, the more dispassionately we view his behavior the more he seems in danger of compromising Israel's moral legacy. As Meir Merhav wrote recently in the *Jerusalem Post*, "Never before have gut reactions been so recklessly substituted for a calculating statesmanship and potential political assets . . . so rapidly converted into political as well as military liabilities as by the rash action in Lebanon—however efficient it may have been from the viewpoint of military technique."

Peace will come in the Middle East when the issues of justice are squarely faced, when the occupied territories are returned as UN Resolution 242 requires, and when the Palestinian Arabs, like the Jews, have some place they can call a home. When President Jimmy Carter tells Begin he has become an obstacle to peace he is telling the truth. Israel's real friends should tell him the same thing.

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NIGHT IN AN ARIZONA INN

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

It is a typical motel—on the fringe of a city and designed to serve passers-through, yet marked in subtle ways by some eddies of the spirit of the place. It is staffed and surrounded by the people who live there; its services are impinged on by local custom. Its exterior shows an effort to fit it into the desert city. The architecture can only be called rancho moderne for lack of any adequate term for its mixed ancestry. It is long and low (but, of course, motels are that by function). Its roof approximates Spanish red tile. The brick and stucco walls are buff and faced with the two-story galleries of the old Southwest.

Within it is relentlessly something else. Whether it is breakfast or dinner, occupants eat in the permanent night of its windowless restaurant. The menu notes claim a New England colonial heritage for both inn and restaurant but the brown plastic leather aprons of the bus boys and the waitresses speak more of Jamestown and Virginia than of "Plimoth Plantation." So does the heavy neo-Tudor furniture and the "Olde Englishe" menu type.

This is the tell-tale mark of the modern west. Anything bespeaking the other side of the mountains from "back east" and all history, other than that of the west, is foreshortened and lumped together. The menu items, too, speak of the west—steaks a bit thin and criss-crossed by the marks of the grill, omelettes just a little oily and always accompanied by fried potatoes, garbanzo beans. There is fish, of course—shrimp and crab (flown from California or Mexico?)—but always the western staples, trout and *mahi-mahi*.

"That's dolphin," explains the waitress to the man at the next table, and laughs a little at his disapproval. "I've spoiled more sales telling people that," she adds. The people at the table are obviously "snowbirds," the Arizona term for winter residents and regulars entertaining a visitor. When the man leaves the table for a few minutes his wife leans toward the visitor, speaking urgently, evidently picking up a topic she had launched earlier.

"When his father comes in, he could just say 'hello, Dad,' you know, just acknowledge he's there. It's so hard on him being out of the business." Her guest—sister-in-law, cousin?—is vague in answering. Perhaps she is hard of hearing. It is not clear what the speaker wants of her guest except, possibly, sympathy, but she speaks with feeling and one recognizes one of the preoccupations of the retired, one of the subjects which go round and round in the mind no longer busy.

The waitress is one of the new Arizonans who arrive daily. I have heard her fending off the approaches of the French businessman at another table. He is, I suppose, one of those harbingers of the foreign capital which I have read in editorials, is changing the economic structure of the country. "You need someone else to show you the town," she says cheerfully. "I'm from New York myself." "Upstate?" I ask her when she approaches me. "Just a country girl," she says cheerfully, acknowledging the gap between Manhattan and the small town outside Buffalo which she tells me is home. "Boy, do I like it here," she says emphatically in reply to my question. "I was out in the sun by the pool this morning when they called from home. There's another blizzard headed there."

The bus boy may be another kind of new Arizonan or perhaps one with an old history. Smiling, very chicano (or Mexican) in appearance, he had astonished me with his brogue when I came in, "Take this table, ma'am (pronouncing it "mom"), the other is durrty." English is clearly his second language. Had he learned it, acquiring the accent and intonation from an early teacher, from one of the FBI priests or nuns as they call the foreign-born-Irish who staff the church.

These fleeting encounters and impressions stay with me as I gather up my copies of the local papers and go back to my room and the traveler's friend, the color TV. As it warms up the sound comes on first—a commercial, "In Arizona it's Dr. So-and-so for dentures. Stop by —no need for an appointment." The commercials seem to run largely to the touting of automobiles and health products.

I find I have tuned into the middle of a political documentary—Arizona is gearing up for its primaries for state office. I have missed the candidate's name but, as a connoisseur of such productions I am immediately impressed by his resources. A full-length program preempting a network slot in prime time! I can only guess at the sum involved. I marvel at the professional expertise behind the program, too. The camera goes from face to face of Arizonans telling what they like about the state. "I like the clean air, the crisp mornings." "I like walking about the streets without fear." The interchange is completely natural. There is none of the forced ease of the auto dealer in the previous commercial, reading so painstakingly from the teleprompter. Only one seems a bit stagy—a man in sombrero and leather jacket who leans against a post shifting a tooth pick in his mouth as he speaks. It takes thousands of feet of film to make it possible to winnow out so many effective takes. I think.

(Continued on page 255)

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THE NEW TRADE WAR

MICHAEL MOFFITT

No longer is the U.S. getting the best of two worlds

In the 1930s, John Maynard Keynes believed that it was possible for nations to insulate themselves from the cutthroat competition for international markets and the depressive effects of conforming to the gold standard in order to pursue full employment policies at home. Indeed, in the last chapter of his opus, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money,* he states that "if nations can learn to provide themselves with full employment by their domestic policy . . . there need be no important economic forces calculated to set the interest of one country against that of its neighbors." This was far from characteristic of his times. When in 1930 the United States enacted the Hawley-Smoot tariff to protect domestic markets from imports, the other advanced capitalist countries retaliated and everybody's trade virtually ground to a halt. The contraction of world trade led to still greater unemployment and actually worsened the Great Depression.

During most of the postwar period, we appeared to be getting the best of both worlds. Nations maintained relatively high levels of employment and, led by the United States, pursued extensive policies of trade liberalization. In recent years, however, we have witnessed a startling turn of events. Under the pressures of stagnant worldwide growth, persistently high inflation and unemployment, and higher oil costs, a 1930s-style trade war has threatened to break out among the world's leading traders: the U.S., the EEC nations and Japan. While previous attempts to legislate renewed high levels of protection in this decade, like the Burke-Hartke bill of 1972 and the Nixon import surcharge of 1971, have been transitory, recent developments suggest that this time the threat is real. Now, with the worldwide economic recovery staggering before any pretense of full employment has been achieved, the possibility of a new trade war is greater than it has ever been.

Here are the facts: Last spring President Carter sent his chief trade negotiator, Robert Strauss, to Japan to negotiate a limit on Japan's exports of color television sets to the United States. They reached an agreement which will reduce Japan's color television exports to the U.S. considerably over a three-year period. In November, one of Strauss's aides, Richard Rivers, presented Tokyo with an "import plan" designed to force the Japanese to allow imports of more U.S. goods into Japan. After that, the Japanese, though outwardly accommodating, were unwilling to yield to the plan, which even included a target date for adoption; Strauss told reporters that sanctions against Japan were "imminent" unless Tokyo responded satisfactorily to Washington's demands. George Meany then picked up the gauntlet, calling free trade a "joke and a myth," and urging that the U.S. "do unto others as they do to us, barrier for barrier, closed door for closed door." Shortly after, Carter revealed a complicated package of import restrictions and incentives to aid the ailing U.S. steel industry. The EEC nations have joined the attack on Japan's huge trade surplus with its major trading partners, repeating the U.S. warning that Japan should "open to our exports and fast."

Various other import restriction agreements, involving shoes, textiles, automobiles, handbags and agricultural products like sugar have either been announced or are in the works. In sum, it appears that Carter,

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Humbled and destroyed after the war, European and Japanese firms had no alternative but to build new plants with modern technology. . . . As other nations acquired modern technology, sometimes leased to them by U.S. firms, the American competitive position in certain markets steadily eroded.

who formerly renounced protectionism as a cure for unemployment, is being compelled by continuing economic stagnation and political forces to yield to specific demands for relief in hopes of heading off a flood of others.

Though changing historical circumstances always make generalizations difficult, it is easy to see the logic of these developments. In theory, everybody benefits from unrestricted trade. Each nation (or region) which specializes in the production of those goods in which it has an advantage over other producers, becomes richer by producing and exporting those goods and importing goods which others produce more cheaply than they can be produced at home. Even if one nation has an advantage over others in producing all goods, it becomes richest by specializing in those goods which afford it the greatest advantage.

In the aftermath of the 1929 Great Crash, it seemed that the days of free trade were gone forever. In periods of economic contraction, corporations and capitalist nations typically try to do what Keynes said they shouldn't: expand markets and maintain high employment at the expense of their trading partners. Obviously, if the growth of markets is limited, not everybody can succeed. One nation's surplus is someone else's deficit. When growth stagnates, there is inevitably an outward thrust for new markets, and competition over existing markets intensifies.

While its politicians preach about the evils of tariffs and trade wars, each rival nation moves to protect itself from imports which damage domestic markets, profits and jobs. A quota is erected here and a tariff there. The whole process is usually accompanied by charges that barriers are only erected to protect domestic markets from "unfair competition" or that foreign producers are "dumping" (selling below cost) goods onto local markets. Each restriction usually begets a reprisal and, sooner or later, everybody winds up with inventories of surplus goods for which export markets no longer exist. When that happens, investments are suspended and workers are laid off.

In contrast to earlier periods, the most striking thing about the current situation is the extent to which the fate of individual nations is dependent upon the others. Since the Second World War, there has been an explosion of international trade and investment quite unlike any former expansion. With the industries of Japan and much of Europe destroyed by the Second World War and the dollar enthroned as the accepted means of international commerce, the U.S. expanded its trade and foreign investments in an unprecedented movement of men, machines and money. By 1976, according to Commerce Department estimates, exports absorbed 23 percent of all goods produced in the United States. 45 percent of the wheat produced in the U.S., 25 percent of the aircraft, over 40 percent of the construction and surface mining machinery, and one-fifth of U.S. agricultural chemicals are exported. Overseas production of U.S.-based multinational corporations is even higher than exports. Many of these corporations now depend on foreign operations for up to half of their total sales and earnings.

When American firms were technologically superior in most industries, the United States remained the world's leading spokesman for multilateral reductions in tariff barriers. However, this superiority was bound to be short-lived. Humbled and destroyed after the war, European and Japanese firms had no alternative but to build new plants with modern technology, which they often did with state financing and ownership. As other nations acquired modern technology, sometimes leased to them by U.S. firms, the American competitive position in certain markets steadily eroded. U.S. firms also modernized and innovated, but this often involved product differentiation and design, not basic restructuring of industry. Competition from imports intensified in the early 1970s and Nixon responded with a 10 percent surcharge on imports and a series of monetary measures, designed to regain the U.S. competitive advantage.

The clearest example of the erosion of American position is the steel industry and this is the source of the industry's current woes. The case of steel is, of course, important and complicated enough to require a separate analysis, but the essential features of the industry are clear and hold important lessons for what may be just around the corner in a number of others. First of all, in many product lines, the Japanese are simply the world's most efficient producers, which is why an increasing number of U.S. steel purchasers have turned to their products. Japan's modern technological base is augmented by their paternalistic statist-management structure in which business, labor and the government closely coordinate their actions.

This is a far cry from the U.S. steel industry. Monopolies tend to grow stagnant with age and the highly-concentrated U.S. steel industry proved no exception. Holding on to a large share of the world market did

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not require the modernization that Japan was compelled to undertake in order to rebuild its industry and capture new markets. The result of this is that some U.S. steelmakers are now attempting to compete in U.S. and world markets with plants and equipment that were built before the first World War! This is why the Youngstown Sheet and Tube company, a subsidiary of the Lykes Corp., closed its Campbell (Ohio) plant recently and terminated 5000 jobs. (In an interesting sidelight to the Lykes case, there is good evidence that the steel division of Lykes's operations was milked by the parent holding company, which is a shipping firm worth much less than Youngstown, which it acquired in 1969. This may well indicate that U.S. steelmakers anticipated the Japanese onslaught all along and simply decided to postpone modernization until the government would agree to underwrite the rationalization and rebuilding of the industry.)

What about Japan's alleged "predatory pricing practices" and "systematic dumping" of steel on U.S. markets, which U.S. producers constantly complain about? If monopolies stagnate with age, they also grow greedy and this is steel's other major problem. In conventional economic theory, firms competing in free markets produce until the cost of producing the final unit is greater than the price it will bring on the market. This is called marginal-cost pricing. Profits represent what is "left over" after covering costs. When an industry becomes monopolized, however, matters are very different. Profits are then written into the average cost structure of an industry, according to a pre-determined "target" level of return. The latter is called full-cost pricing.

What is troubling the U.S. industry is that the Japanese are engaging in price competition which domestic producers are either unwilling or unable to meet. As *Wall Street Journal* columnist David Ignatius explains (November 21) ". . . the American steel industry has argued that the foreign producers are 'unfair' competitors. Why? Because in weak markets, they sell at prices that approach marginal costs, making it difficult for anyone to earn a profit. 'Fair' trade, the American steelmakers contend, should be at prices that reflect average costs of production, plus a reasonable mark-up." What Ignatius is really saying is that the Japanese are willing to hold prices down in order to carve out new U.S. markets and that the U.S. industry is too arrogant to do the same. As Barry Bosworth, Director of the Council on Wage and Price Stability, once put it: U.S. steelmakers "got greedy" and pushed up prices earlier in the 1970s when they should have taken advantage of two dollar devaluations which had effectively raised the price of Japanese steel here. (Interestingly enough, Bosworth tempered his criticism of the industry after he became Director of the Council. He had been an industry critic while at the Brookings Institute.) Instead, the U.S. steel industry (with the union leadership in its pocket) has sought, and recently obtained, government protection in order to keep the share of imports under 20 percent of the U.S. market and reduce it farther if possible.

By setting "reference prices" for imports, Carter has in effect said to Japan: no more price competition in the U.S. market. This, no doubt, is one of the reasons why the industry's leading producer, U.S. Steel, has announced a new round of price rises. Firms will be able, at least for the time being, to sell all the steel they want at or above reference prices which will be calculated according to the U.S. government's interpretation of Japan's costs of production. This method of limiting imports is in fact little more than a slap at Japan. Since West European firms have higher production costs than Japan's, by selling steel in the U.S. at the reference prices, they would be "dumping" steel on the U.S. market. Japan, in effect, will be penalized for being efficient.

At this point, of course, the U.S. industry and its

representatives in the government will cry in unison that the Japanese government subsidizes its steel firms, which is why they can sell below cost in this country. However there is no evidence that these subsidies are a significant factor which makes Japanese steel more competitive. According to the Federal Trade Commission, government subsidies to German and Japanese steelmakers amount to less than one percent of their production costs, hardly enough to make the difference. Nor do most government spokesmen mention the large U.S. subsidies to great U.S. industries like automobiles and defense which have facilitated their competitive position in international markets and created a lot of demand for U.S.-made steel in the process.

Aside from the purely protectionist measures, the steel industry's response to the crisis has consisted of a new round of anti-competitive mergers (such as Jones & Laughlin Steel's, a subsidiary of the LTV conglomerate, intended absorption of Lykes), increased plant closing, layoffs, and renewed assaults on environmental protection. It is not surprising that the most creative response yet to the crises of communities such as Ohio's Mahoning Valley, which are the victims of trade-related

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dislocations, have gotten the least publicity. When the Youngstown plant closing was announced last fall, the national union leadership and business interests were of little help in devising a program to protect the livelihoods of the workers and their families. Consequently, local religious leaders assumed the responsibility of exploring the possibility of community and worker ownership of the steel works in order to make it economically viable if not "profitable" in Big Steel's sense. According to one spokesman familiar with the Youngstown crisis, "people had their economic foundation pulled out from underneath them by planning decisions made elsewhere and the community began to ask who controlled these planning decisions and in whose interests." The religious group, known as the Ecumenical Coalition of the Mahoning Valley, believes that what happened in Youngstown is likely to be repeated in other communities around the country, thus bringing issues of worker and community control of abandoned production facilities to the forefront of the political agenda.

More Intensive Conflicts

This is precisely the point: however grave the current crisis of steel may seem and whatever the results of the new Carter program, this crisis is but a harbinger of greater and more intensive conflicts to come between the U.S. and its major trading partners. To understand why, we must recognize that profound changes in world economic conditions have taken place in the last decade. If the first two decades of the postwar period witnessed an unprecedented expansion of the power of the U.S. in the world, then the most significant characteristic of the last ten years has been the challenge to U.S. power.

The deterioration of American hegemony is perhaps most visible in the crisis of the international monetary system. If there is to be international trade and investment, there has to be a means of settling international transactions acceptable to trading nations and certain rules about how accounts will be settled. In the last century, under the hegemony of Great Britain, the pound sterling functioned as the world's currency and surpluses or deficits in a nation's trade balance were settled by movements of gold. After the First World War, reflecting the ascent of the United States as a major power, New York became the world's banker and following the Second World War the dollar became the world's currency. At the Bretton Woods Conference of 1944, nations agreed to peg their currencies at par values to the dollar, which was henceforth considered as "good as gold."

For a variety of reasons, including the rapid recovery of Japan and West Europe, chronic U.S. deficit spending, and Vietnam War-related inflation, the old system became increasingly untenable. By abrogating our responsibility to supply gold at $35 an ounce to foreign holders cashing in U.S. dollars, the Nixon administration, in August 1971, flatly broke with the Bretton Wood rules, and several attempts to patch up the old system have been limited in their effectiveness. While there have been innumerable international conferences and declarations on creating a new monetary regime, there has been little progress toward a lasting accord.

A monetary or trading system represents the institutionalization of a set of power relationships. For most of the postwar period, the U.S. was able to maintain the advantages it derived from the Bretton Woods system because it was the world's leading military and economic power. Now the U.S. economic advantage has diminished and rivalries between the U.S., the EEC and Japan are accelerating. Thus, it should come as no surprise that the monetary system has remained in a state of flux and extreme uncertainty. Since no single nation has the power to determine the rules of the game, managing the current system of floating exchange rates necessarily involves a great deal of cooperation on the part of governments. Indeed, *the system can only function if and when the leading capitalist powers are willing to agree on the ground rules and abide by them.*

Since 1973, the world has a system of floating exchange rates. In theory, under a system of floating exchange rates, the value of any currency is determined by the demand for the currency in relation to its supply. If there is little demand for a nation's exports, people will probably not buy its currency and its value will fall in relation to others. Central banks' actions naturally affect exchange rates, but such intervention is theoretically to smooth out erratic movements in exchange rates, not to influence underlying values.

In recent times, however, the United States, the EEC nations and Japan have been abusing the system of floating rates and manipulating exchange markets in order to fight a concealed trade war. This has been a source of constant tension and figures to play a large role in current deliberations about what to do about Japan's large trade surplus with the West. In conventional theory, an undervalued currency will stimulate a nation's exports by keeping the prices of its goods cheaper in terms of other countries. An overvalued currency, on the other hand, raises the prices of one's exports and encourages imports. A "clean" currency float is designed to make these adjustments automatically through the market rather than according to the desires of governments. Throughout 1976, the Japanese central bank was intervening in foreign exchange markets, buying large amounts of dollars in order to keep the value of the yen (which stood about 300 to the dollar then) from rising. By keeping the value of its currency artificially low for an extended period of time, Japan kept

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its export prices low (in terms of other currencies) to supplement its exports. Thus, Japan was engaging in a "dirty" currency float in order to maintain exports and jobs at the expense of its major trading partners.

Carter's economic policy makers, especially at Treasury, were determined to put a stop to this. Last summer Treasury Secretary W. Michael Blumenthal began complaining in public about the large European and Japanese trade surpluses in the face of a projected $25-30 billion U.S. deficit. He also objected to their tight-fisted fiscal and monetary policies. The accepted theory here is that because the U.S. has recovered from recession faster than its major trading partners, this has stimulated demand in the U.S. for their exports, but not vice-versa. Indicating that the U.S. would not intervene should the dollar fall, he clearly hoped that, while pushing them to apply the expansionist medicine, rising values of their currencies would restore some of the trade imbalance.

Ultimately, this policy of "benign neglect" toward the dollar led to outcries that the U.S. was flooding the world with cheap dollars at the expense of its trading partners. U.S. policymakers are, of course, fully aware that the dollar is still the world's number-one currency, in large part because the U.S. is viewed as the last bastion of capitalism, and they exploit this to the hilt. In other words, the U.S. is able to trade its paper I.O.U.'s for real goods and services. Another implication is that European central bankers are compelled to intervene in foreign exchange markets to prevent the dollar from declining too steeply. Thus German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt complained at the recent Common Market meetings that Western Europe was "financing" the U.S. by being forced to buy large amounts of dollars. As one European banker remarked to the *New York Times*, "I'm afraid Carter is pulling another Vietnam on us." The difference is that in the last decade, the U.S. payments deficits and dollar outflows were due to war-related government spending, while now government deficits are supplemented by large deficits in merchandise trade.

Calling floating exchange rates "the calm before an economic storm," *Business Week* concluded that "as nations seek to protect their economic future in a world of shrinking trade, the floating rate system is today being subverted by degrees of government intervention in the currency markets that dwarf anything seen under the fixed-rate Bretton Woods system, when nations were required to intervene."

The deterioration of American hegemony is perhaps most visible in the crisis of the international monetary system. . . . There has to be a means of settling international transactions acceptable to trading nations and certain rules about how accounts will be settled.

Though the yen rose dramatically during late 1976 and 1977, from the U.S. point of view, the appreciation did not have the desired effects. The higher yen has not encouraged more Japanese imports or curtailed their exports to the U.S. This is because the conservative belief that a devaluation automatically spurs exports and discourages imports has always been over--simplified.

Nor have the West Germans and Japanese agreed to add much in the way of fiscal stimulus to reflate their economies. Blumenthal probably felt especially betrayed after their last May's London Economic Summit, when the Japanese had pledged to reflate and reduce the trade surplus. Instead, they sought to fuel domestic growth by expanding exports, rather than risk a new round of inflation at home. With Japan's exports pouring into the U.S. at record levels, the Carter policymakers turned in frustration to attacking certain imported products like steel. As the *Economist* of London aptly remarked: "The U.S. stopped talking up the yen and started threatening Japan with a trade war."

One lesson of this chain of events is that the world capitalist economy has entered a profound structural crisis. The conflicts which beset the United States, Western Europe and Japan were not caused by distortions in exchange rates and cannot be overcome by simply re-adjusting them. At the root of the crisis is the disappointing economic recovery and the ensuing conflict among the leading powers for a larger share of the benefits of limited growth. While neither Japan nor West Germany has the power to supplant the U.S. as the world's leading capitalist power (especially in military affairs), at the same time they feel no great compulsion to acquiesce to every American demand. The much-heralded agreement which Strauss hammered out with the Japanese in January, in which they agreed to drop barriers to U.S. exports and adopt a more expansionary economic policy, may ultimately prove to be no more meaningful than the value agreements that have been reached at the several recent economic summits.

Under these circumstances, the situation of Japan is especially tenuous. Since the Second World War Japan has been unique among the advanced capitalist countries in several respects. It has maintained a more closed economy than the U.S. or Western Europe, with relatively high levels of protection and little foreign direct investment. At the same time, Japan is more dependent on imports of primary commodities (fuels,

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The spread of protectionism will surely have a detrimental effect on Third World economic growth. For years many Third World countries have attempted to expand their export of labor-intensive manufacturers. . . . If these products—shoes, textiles, handbags—become subject to increasing import restrictions, even modest employment gains will be threatened.

metals, minerals) than the others and depends much more on exports to maintain domestic economic growth. These factors have required a certain amount of tolerance on the part of the other advanced countries, especially the U.S. Immediately after the war, the U.S. was only too happy to rehabilitate a major capitalist power in Asia, and though there was little direct investment in Japan, U.S. firms profited considerably from technology licensing and sales. During the 1960s the overall performance of the world economy was strong enough to absorb Japan's huge exports. But now that overall economic growth and growth in trade in particular has slowed, Japan is being forced to make concessions which would threaten that high growth economy. Thus far, Japanese policymakers have appeared very accommodating outwardly, but some sources say they are fuming and are by no means prepared to make the kinds of concessions the U.S. demands. But at the same time, U.S. demands cannot be taken lightly. The U.S. absorbs about one-fifth of Japan's total exports and much higher percentages in crucial goods like steel, autos, and electronic products. In addition the developing Japanese "software" industries (i.e., computers) are beginning to penetrate American markets and will do so increasingly in the future. If the U.S. slapped some form of across-the-board controls on Japanese imports its expansion plans would be in serious jeopardy.

In addition, the spread of protectionism will surely have a detrimental impact on Third World economic growth. For years, many Third World countries have attempted to expand their exports of labor-intensive manufactures. Though the performance has seldom lived up to the expectations, these exports did offer some gains in employment. If these products—textiles, shoes, handbags—become subject to increasing import restrictions, even these modest gains would be threatened.

Whether or not the scenario of a 1930s-style trade war will be replayed is not the fundamental question. Political conditions, among other things, are very different now. What matters is whether or not the world capitalist economy, in a world where there is no single dominant power, will be able to regain the balance between competing interests which was achieved under the dominance of the United States. The main obstacle to this is still the laggard prospects for adequate economic growth. Even in the U.S., which has recovered faster than the other advanced countries, the large capital goods spending by giant corporations which characterized other postwar recoveries has simply not materialized. The uncertainty and lack of "business confidence," which we hear about so often, appears to have taken on a life of its own to the point where it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Despite a dramatic recovery of profits, corporations say they simply will not commit large amounts of capital to basic investment and expansion until the uncertainties over tax policies, energy, import quotas and the value of the dollar have been settled. This in turn inhibits growth and brings fears of a new recession in 1978 or 1979.

Consequently, the lack of investment opportunities and the availability of cash have led to a new orgy of speculation. These conditions have unleashed a new corporate merger movement in the United States which is beginning to rival the massive conglomerate expansion of the 1960s. At a time when Michael Blumenthal and others are lobbying for increased tax incentives for new investments, and with millions of people out of work, some of the largest corporations, like General Electric, R. J. Reynolds, Gulf, and Pepsico are spending record amounts of cash to acquire choice subsidiaries. Even European firms are trying to get in on the action. "Europe is going socialist," according to one banker, "here's a chance (in the U.S.) to invest in 20 years of participation in a free economy before you catch our disease." But however lucrative such activities are for stockholders and managements, they do nothing to enhance real economic growth, on which the viability of the whole world system ultimately depends.

In the past, solutions to these deep-rooted conflicts have ranged from wars and trade wars to extreme political authoritarianism. Precisely to avoid this kind of destructive competition and promote cooperation between the leading power centers of the U.S., Western Europe and Japan, among other things, the Trilateral Commission was established in 1973. But there is still a growing realization that the long postwar economic boom, which provided the economic basis for the American-European-Japanese alliance, has come to an end. On this score, neither the Keynesians nor the Monetarists have any answers. In the final analysis, we may be forced to admit that we have never learned Keynes's lesson of how to enjoy full employment at home without waging destructive wars and trade wars against our neighbors.

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CONTAMINATING MICHIGAN'S FOOD CHAIN

THOMAS C. FOX

Polybrominated biphenyl out of control

Sometime in late February, health researchers began to fan out across Michigan to interview and draw blood from 6,000 state residents in an effort to measure for the first time the scope of one of the worst food contaminations in U.S. history. The research teams, funded belatedly with $2.25 million by the State Legislature, will try to determine how a little-known but extremely toxic chemical called polybrominated biphenyl, or simply PBB, is affecting peoples' health.

Tests have shown most Michigan residents—as many as 96 percent—carry PBB in their body tissues. Such were the results when samples of breast milk were measured for traces of PBB.

Much remains to be learned about Michigan's food contamination disaster which began in 1973. Researchers will spend most of the year trying to gather information that will have implications for the future health of Michigan residents, and that of the nation as well. No one knows yet, for example, possibly how much PBB has entered the bodies of those living in Michigan; nor is it known exactly how much people can tolerate before they take ill. It is feared, as well, that PBB will eventually increase cancer risks.

To date, the best clues to these open-questions come from tests taken in 1976 on 1,029 Michigan farmers who ate large amounts of PBB-contaminated meat and drank tainted milk. Over a third of those tested showed abnormalities such as memory loss, excessive fatigue, diminished sex drive, and lack of coordination; one-fifth had unusual skin sores and acne; still others suffered stomach and intestinal disorders.

PBB has not only entered the Michigan food chain; the toxic chemical has spread beyond the state too. In 1977, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found PBB in the air, water, fish, soil and human hair in parts of New York and New Jersey, and in catfish in the Ohio river.

The food poisoning can be traced to actions in October, 1971 when the Michigan Chemical Company of St. Louis, Michigan began marketing PBB as a fire-retardant. It became widely used in thermal plastics such as television casings. PBB had the trade name "Firemaster." A year-and-a-half later, the company also began manufacturing magnesium oxide, a cattle feed additive supposed to increase milk production. That product sold under the name "Nutrimaster."

In May, 1973, Michigan Chemical reportedly ran short of bags and placed the normally color-coded chemicals into the same brown paper bags. Ordinarily, the two chemicals do not look alike: magnesium oxide is a fine white powder and PBB comes in pinkish chunks. But in late 1971 or early 1972, the company ground the PBB into fine white powder. So, when the bag shortage occurred the only visible difference between the two chemicals was the prefix of their trade names, stenciled on the 50-pound bags in black.

Michigan Chemical does not discuss the incident, but it is believed that between ten and 48 50-pound bags of PBB were mistaken for magnesium oxide and were sent out as cattle feed additives. The bags were sent to the Michigan Farm Bureau Services in Battle Creek, a subsidiary of the Michigan Farm Bureau, a huge statewide farmers organization. The Farm Bureau mixed the PBB with livestock feed and then delivered the poisoned feed to dairy farmers throughout Michigan. Some farmers purchased the PBB bags directly, mixing it with their own grain and feeding it to their herds.

Within months, in the summer of 1973, farmers began to notice their cows did not want to eat and that milk production was falling off dramatically. Some farmers forced their cattle to eat the poisoned-feed by making certain they went hungry until they did. Others mixed molasses with the feed to make it more attractive to the cows. One farmer reported one of his cows dropped dead after eating the feed. Cows throughout the state got sick. Some began aborting their calves or delivering stillborn. Others developed serious infections. Some calves lived only days after birth. And farmers became desperate, unable to explain their herds' illnesses.

Rick Halbert was one of those farmers. In the Fall of 1973, he watched milk production in his 800-head herd fall off. He saw his cows develop abscesses; others abort their calves. And he called for help—as other farmers did. Suspecting poisoned feed, he traced his feed back through the Farm Bureau Services to Michigan Chemical. He called the company, he recalls, only to be told that the feed was good and that no other farmers were complaining. But the situation was getting worse. His cows began to lose their hair. Their hooves

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turned upward. Their skins thickened. He wanted an explanation.

Halbert found two other farmers whose herds were showing similar illnesses. The three men went to the Michigan Agriculture Department to make a report and to ask for help. The state sent out a vet to the men's farms. But he could not make a diagnosis and suggested, after several visits, that the farmers were unintentionally poisoning their own cows by giving them moldy food. Halbert grew furious. A 31-year-old former chemical engineer, Halbert began conducting his own experiments. He fed 12 18-month-old heifers and bulls the contaminated feed. Within six weeks, half of them died. Still, tests taken by state officials and scientists at Michigan State University found nothing unusual about the feed. In desperation, he ate some of the feed himself to determine any unusual characteristics. He found none. And he couldn't get researchers interested in his problems. He even went to an Indiana vet who gave mice the tainted feed to eat. They soon died.

It was not until January, 1974—a half-year after the poison entered the Michigan food chain—that a Michigan Department of Agriculture scientist confirmed the feed's toxicity. But he could not identify the poisonous agent.

At the same time, the Michigan Farm Bureau, besieged by complaining farmers, issued a recall for the feed mix—Dairy 402. But bureau's efforts were halfhearted. Some farmers claim the Farm Bureau never contacted them. Others even say they got letters in May, 1974, assuring them the feed was safe. At best, the recalls were spotty. The result was many farmers never learned they had received tainted feed. Many farmers unknowingly sold and ate highly contaminated meat and milk. In some cases, farmers, seeing their cattle grow ill, sold them to rescue their investments. The meat went to the market and to grocery stores.

By the Spring of 1974, Halbert had lost $80,000 in production alone; half his herd was dead; most of the rest sick. He continued to push for an explanation. Finally, his crusade led him to a toxicologist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Pesticide Degradation Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland. Halbert told Dr. George Fries about his herd and the symptoms they had been showing. Even before Fries did any tests, he told Halbert by phone that his feed appeared to contain PBB. Three days later, on April 29, 1974, Fries told Halbert the suspicion was confirmed. By a remarkable coincidence, Fries had experimented with PBB two years earlier. He knew that the only company in the world to make PBB was Michigan Chemical.

Halbert immediately notified the Farm Bureau Services. Within a month, the first Michigan farm quarantines began. Eight farmers, the first of an eventual 500, were told they couldn't move their animals off their farms or sell their products. Farmers began to go bankrupt. Others, meanwhile, suspecting their own herds had been contaminated, frantically sold their sick cattle, swine and chickens.

The bottom line was money. State officials showed little inclination to bail the farmers out or to even loan them money at low interest rates to save their herds. Meanwhile, sick cattle were being sold and state officials were making no extraordinary efforts to stop the practice. Again, anything more than spot checks cost additional money. And it wasn't coming. State officials lacked vision, seemingly even concern.

Michigan Chemical stopped marketing PBB in November, 1974. But PBB continued to show up—even in feeds that did not include magnesium oxide. Soon it was learned that PBB residuals were being passed through plant equipment, from the mills that mixed the PBB with the cattle feed.

The secondary contamination was further compounded as farmers, selling their ill cattle, sometimes had them ground up to be recycled as livestock feed. This contaminated animals on farms that had not previously been exposed to PBB and it widened the poison's reach in the food chain to staggering degrees. Degrees that no one then suspected.

From the beginning, the attitudes of Michigan officials, particulary the Michigan Agriculture Department, was to downplay the disaster, to minimize the harmful effects it would have on the environment, on health. The Agriculture Dept. never systematically warned farmers of the contamination. Because many herds were not found and quarantined, some farmers, unaware their herds had been poisoned, consumed contaminated milk and meat and sold their produce to the public. The state did not begin the regular testing of meat being sold to the public until January, 1975—seven months after the contamination had been discovered. Even tested meat samples were not kept off meat counters. Instead, they were permitted to be sold mostly as hamburger even before the tests were completed.

Michigan Agriculture Department Director B. Dale Ball never saw the need to warn state farmers or to keep all tainted products off grocery store shelves. "We assume farmers can read and read the paper . . . I can't mail something to every farmer in the state. He can test the same as we can if he's concerned," he told reporters.

Because of Ball's reluctance to act decisively Michigan consumers are still eating PBB. In 1976, alone, Michigan residents ate an estimated five million to seven million pounds of hamburger contaminated with PBB.

The record of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is not much better. Instead of banning the chemical from food until it could be determined if the food was safe, it allowed tainted products to be sold to the public.

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The FDA's allowable guidelines were one part PBB per million in meat and milk, .1 part per million in eggs. But after animals within the "safe" limits continued to show symptoms of toxicity, the FDA lowered the level for meat and milk to .3 part per million.

As for the Michigan Department of Public Health, it organized a short-term study of the PBB contamination shortly after it became public and quickly found that no human health problems could be attributed to the chemical. But the control group, used in the study, had also been widely exposed to, and contaminated by, PBB.

Shortly after the contamination problem became public in 1974, Dr. Irving J. Selikoff, a specialist on the human health effects of industrial contaminants, offered to come to Michigan to check out the damage. But his offer was not taken up by state officials. And Selikoff said he would not come unless invited by them. Nearly two years later, the offer was discovered by an aide to a Michigan representative, House Speaker Bobby D. Crim. The aide pressed for Selikoff to come to study PBB. He finally arrived in November, 1976—

three-and-a-half years after the original accident. Beginning in 1976, the local press, slow at first to pick up the initial significance of the poisoning, began following the PBB problem more carefully. The story was taking a focus. It was becoming a political issue.

Selikoff studied 1,029 Michigan farmers, their families, and employees of Michigan Chemical. His preliminary results issued in January, 1977, revealed neurological abnormalities, unusual skin conditions and gastrointestinal ailments among the farmers and Michigan Chemical employees.

The announcement of the findings prompted a public outcry for PBB food chain reductions. Selikoff touched off demands himself when he told a press conference: "I urge people in Michigan to prod Governor (William) Milliken to lower the levels to as low as he possibly can."

But it was clear to state legislators and the Republican governor that lowering PBB tolerance levels meant greater financial losses to the state's farmers. And coupled with that idea was the nagging question of how the state should compensate those losses. In May, 1974, the State Legislature gutted a bill that would have permitted the state Agriculture Department to order the destruction of PBB-contaminated animals and pay farmers for those animals. In 1975, the state legislature and Milliken turned down a request from state health officials for funding a long-term study on PBB's effect on people.

In January, 1976, Milliken vetoed a bill to provide low-interest loans for farmers hit by PBB. At the same time, he appointed a "blue-ribbon" scientific panel to study PBB, then failed to push vigorously for any of its recommendations, chief among them that the PBB in food be as low as possible. Six months later, the state Agriculture Commission refused the governor's eventual request to make some PBB reductions in food. The State Legislature also refused to lower the level, and Milliken failed to further pressure the issue.

It was only in early 1977, after the Selikoff report became public, that Milliken began to work to lower PBB levels in the state. It was about the same time, incidentally, that state Democrats began rumbling that the governor's handling of the contamination would be a serious issue in the 1978 election. Milliken now concedes he did not move fast enough in the early critical months after the PBB contamination, explaining he did not regard PBB as a crisis until 1976.

It won't be until next Fall that researchers will hope to learn just how much damage has been caused to the health of those living in Michigan. PBB, it is known, catches in bodily fats, leaving in large amounts only through mothers' breast milk. This has caused many mothers to wonder if the advantages of breast-feeding their infants still outweigh health risks involved.

The PBB experience has already taken a devastating toll: Hundreds of Michigan farms were contaminated; more than 30,000 cattle were shot; 5000 swine and sheep, 1.5 million chickens, 2600 pounds of butter, 34,000 pounds of milk products, 5 million eggs had to be destroyed. And the list goes on.

Meanwhile, Michigan Chemical, plagued by lawsuits, has not only stopped making PBB, but is shutting down its plant in St. Louis, a town of 4200. It is moving to Arkansas because it cannot meet Michigan water pollution standards. The company has changed its name, and operating as Velsicol Chemical, will go on trial in a Grand Rapids federal court sometime this year, along with Farm Bureau Services, for causing the disaster. Even if convicted, however, the companies will only have to pay fines of $1,000 because the charges are misdemeanors.

Due to 1977 state legislation, Michigan PBB standards are much stricter now than federal standards. The FDA still refuses to lower the level of PBB it will permit in food, despite mounting clinical and laboratory evidence that PBB is dangerous to people. FDA tolerance levels run 15 times higher than those allowed in Michigan now, but it took the state nearly three years to do what FDA refused to do, and that is lowering the level enough to keep food tainted with all but minute levels of PBB off the market.

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THE GOLDEN CALF OF GAMBLING

DAN HENEGHAN

Casinos in place of people

The approval of casino gambling for Atlantic City in November, 1976, signaled the rebirth of a dying city. Unfortunately, that city reborn may not have any room for the very people who struggled for years to breathe life back into it.

The city that everybody rallied to save is slowly forcing a number of its residents to move elsewhere, including the old, the poor, the minorities and even some of the middle class. The people who bet the most on Atlantic City are getting the short end of the stick. A city on the brink of explosive growth, Atlantic City is starting to see that while casino gambling opens the door to a revitalization of the area, the lure of gambling will bring with it urban problems that may be greater than the ills that it was intended to overcome.

Atlantic City used to be a highly fashionable seashore resort years ago. It boasted of magnificent hotels which stood majestically along the famous boardwalk and beach. Visitors from all over the Northeast flocked to Atlantic City every summer just as people now flock to places like the Hamptons. Atlantic City was their home away from the big city which still retained all of the good things the big cities had to offer. It was then that Atlantic City earned its reputation of "Queen of Resorts."

But that glitter faded through the '50s and '60s. Improvements in things like air travel made it easier for people to find vacation spots further south where summer lingered a little longer. At the same time, many of the urban problems that cropped up in every other major city appeared in Atlantic City and frightened some people into finding a safer vacation spot.

Atlantic City became trapped in a vicious circle. As fewer visitors came to the city, hotels and businesses lost more and more money. The quality of the hotel accommodations, for example, dropped. Conventioneers became upset at the poor quality of the accommodations and their conventions went elsewhere. Hotels closed, making it harder to find a good place to stay, so fewer people stayed, fewer dollars came into the city and fewer businesses were able to survive. Some of the ones that did survive did so only by gouging tourists during a 12-week season and then closing up for the winter.

The city's population slipped from a high of nearly 70,000 to its present 42,000. As the people fled, they left behind the old people who had either lived there all their lives or retired there to relive fond memories of a time past. They were either too proud or too poor to desert the city. Many just had nowhere else to go. Their numbers swelled, hotels were converted into senior citizens' housing units, and Atlantic City became second only to Fort Lauderdale, Fla. in its concentration of elderly residents.

The elderly lived side by side, and sometimes in fear of, the minorities—the blacks and Puerto Ricans who moved here in search of jobs in the hotels. They ended up unemployed as hotels and other businesses closed down. Overall unemployment figures in the city rose to more than 20 percent, particularly in the winter. The rate for young blacks and Hispanics was more than double that.

As visitors vanished, the small businesses were hurt as much as anyone else, particularly the Boardwalk merchants. They could no longer count on the large tourist trade. Tourists weren't there any more and the local people were finding it cheaper to shop in suburban malls.

Atlantic City has always been dependent on tourism and conventions. When the tourists went elsewhere and the convention trade withered, nearly everyone in the city faced economic strangulation. The city neared death.

It was in that atmosphere that the people of Atlantic City turned to the golden calf of casino gambling. After an initial failure in 1974, the city mounted a slick million-dollar campaign urging voters to "Help Rebuild Atlantic City" by legalizing casinos there.

The campaign to legalize casino gambling in Atlantic City, in retrospect, was a bedside vigil for a city which died on election night in 1976. When the voters of New Jersey approved casino gambling, Atlantic City died. In its place is arising a new creature, which outwardly resembles Atlantic City, but is completely removed from the city which people wanted to rebuild. It is a creature which the state, big business and the underworld are struggling to control.

The people who rejoiced at the election results soon found that this new creature, this new Atlantic City, held little respect for the Atlantic City they tried to

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save. For example, the Bally Manufacturing Co., the largest manufacturer of slot machines in the world, has announced plans to demolish the stately Marlborough-Blenheim Hotel which has stood on the Boardwalk since the turn of the century. Part of the building, which was built under the direction of Thomas Edison to prove that poured concrete could be used for large-scale construction, is on the National Register of Historic Places. But that doesn't matter, for in a few years it will be gone and a brand new, ultra-modern casino hotel complex will be there in its place. Another old hotel, perhaps the finest in the city, is going to remain. But the post-casino Chalfonte-Haddon Hall, now called the Resorts International Hotel, will only resemble its former self. The entire front desk and much of the lobby have been torn out and the rich woodwork from the 1939s has been replaced with a black and red cocktail lounge and something resembling an airline check-in counter for a front desk. They've performed an architectural hysterectomy by tearing out a marble staircase and replacing it with an escalator. By Las Vegas standards the building will be beautiful, but it will be an affront to the Atlantic City that people wanted to preserve and revive. They will be a glaring reminder of the drastic changes in store for Atlantic City.

During the campaign to approve gambling, supporters stressed that it would stimulate the revival of the aging resort. They said it would bring in much needed capital, new construction, jobs, tourists and conventions. At the same time, the tax revenue generated by casinos would be dedicated for the benefit of senior citizens and the handicapped.

In what they said, the campaign organizers were correct. Independent planners have estimated that by 1990, gambling will have created up to 105,800 new jobs in southern New Jersey. In addition, gambling will generate up to $100 million in construction costs alone in that same period. The city will blossom, new hotels and gambling will draw millions to the city with billions of dollars to spend. Big conventions will come back and top name stars will entertain here again in a new, alive Atlantic City.

But they never mentioned that people would be forced to move out because of casinos, others would be priced out and that the state would take over all but the most minute decision-making powers in the city, robbing people who remained of their local autonomy.

During the campaign, those who opposed legalization of gambling, backed mostly by various church groups, voiced only tacit opposition, citing morality as their aim. To fight the claims of what a billion-dollar gambling industry could do for the area, the opposition told tales of fathers gambling away money needed to feed hungry children. If only they had known what gambling would really do. No one even conceived of the havoc that gambling would bring to the social fabric of Atlantic City.

The legalization of casino gambling for Atlantic City has caused property values to skyrocket. In the city's run-down sections, landlords with visions of multi-million-dollar casino complexes on their land have started applying pressure on tenants to move out. They threaten eviction for code violations that went ignored for years and then attempt to shut off utility service if the people don't move out. There have also been a number of very suspicious fires which have left families homeless and given owners a good excuse for leveling their unproductive buildings.

While these pressure tactics are most noticeable in a section of the city scheduled to be rezoned for casino development, they certainly aren't limited to that area. They aren't even limited to poor neighborhoods but have spread through the middle and upper middle-class neighborhoods of Atlantic City and neighboring communities. Homeowners have found that gambling has pushed the value of their homes higher while increasing the need for services, which all translates into higher taxes. Instead of offering hope to the people who need it most, the coming of gambling has only made it harder for them to survive. The people who lived there for years, watching the city decline while suffering under increased taxation, are being forced out. They were the people who wagered the most on casino gambling—it was to be their salvation but it has turned into their ruination.

The most visible victims of casino gambling will be the Boardwalk merchants. Rents have been tripled almost overnight and other merchants have seen their leases canceled entirely. As casinos go up along the Boardwalk, many of the merchants who have been there for years will not be able to return to the city they struggled to keep alive. The huge, faceless conglomerates that plan to remake the face of the Boardwalk hold little respect for the job that the shops have performed over the years. Granted, some of the shops along Atlantic City's most famous street are not first-class establishments; they are the cheap souvenir stands, fast food outlets, salt water taffy shops and auction houses. Over the years, however, these businesses served as anchors, holding fast the Boardwalk against the creeping tide of urban decay that was washing across large sections of the city.

Atlantic City is in an enviable position in that the problems it faces are problems of growth while most other urban areas are trying to cope with decline. But until Atlantic City resolves those problems, casino gambling will do to residents there the same thing the city has done to visitors for years—soak them for all they are worth and then cast them aside.

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THE STAGE

David Mamet's *The Water Engine*, which opened the new Theater Cabaret at the Public Theater, is a perfect play for a serious theater organization's initiation into cabaret because it has a great many surface virtues and substance enough to interest anyone who begins to ask questions about the obvious games it plays. Originally written for radio, it is a large-cast piece in which a radio play is being performed and in which the audience experiences both the broadcast melodrama and the presentation situation. The playgoers become accomplices of the production, applauding on cue, playing the live audience at a broadcast that is supposedly taking place as 1934 turns into 1935. *The Water Engine* is identified as another in a series called *The Century of Progress* after the Chicago World's Fair which provides both the impetus for the play and in part the setting. Clearly a Chicago script, despite the fiction of its being broadcast from New York, the play gives the audience the mechanics of the old radio shows—the sound effects, the music under, the artificial urgency of the voices, the significant silences. Nostalgia on the friendly side of parody, it suggests those sequences in Mamet's *A Life in the Theater* in which the two actors, whose real story takes place backstage, perform in conventional theater pieces. More sustained than the bits in *Life*, *The Water Engine* is so cleverly written that it sucks the audience into the story of Charles Lang and his invention of an engine that runs on water. He is menaced by two lawyers—a jovial one (David Sabin seems to have found his characterization by watching Walter Connolly in 1930s movies) and a threatening one—who represent big business's need to get and destroy the plans. Lang and his sister are finally murdered, but the plans are saved, passed on to the bright little boy in the candy store who will presumably continue the tradition of Charles Lang, the good side of the play's often reiterated line about science as knowledge "for good or evil."

Simple participatory fun, then, but I think Mamet has something more serious in mind, as his violations of both his borrowed genre and the spirit of the Chicago fair suggest. Although there are occasionally sophisticated radio scripts, like Archibald MacLeish's *The Fall of the City*, willing to embrace negativism if only as a warning, the standard 1930s radio melodrama series would have saved Charles Lang a beat or two before the final commercial. Comically portentous lines like the often repeated "Much is known, much is not known, much will not be known" suggest such series, echoing the tone of *The Shadow*'s "Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men." When Lang turns to the newspaperman for help, those of us who remember the intrepid Steve Wilson expect journalistic rescue, but Mamet's newspaperman shrugs off his platitudes even as he speaks them and defeats the expectation which is still entangled in the opening proclamation of *Big Town*: "The freedom of the press is a flaming sword!"

The optimism of radio melodrama had its more elegant counterpart in the theme of the Chicago exposition. The general attitude of the fair, in both its trivial and its serious aspects, is summed up in the definition Charles A. Beard offered in *A Century of Progress*, the book he edited for the occasion: "it implies that mankind, by making use of science and invention, can progressively emancipate itself from plagues, famines, and social disasters, and subjugate the materials and forces of the earth to the purposes of the good life." Even with the implied promise of the candy-store boy, *The Water Engine* suggests that invention will either be co-opted or destroyed by big business. There were men who questioned the idea of celebrating progress in 1933-34, but the contemporary contrast between fact and ideal is not the propellant that drives *The Water Engine*. Mamet stands in the late 1970s, looking back to the years before he was born, and adapts the instruments of generic and ideational optimism to express a contemporary American dis-ease that persists even though the system has presumably been born again.

When I was a boy, we all knew that the ever-burning light bulb and all those other wonderful inventions had been buried beneath the needs of corporate greed. Although the suspicion that we are regularly being poisoned or ripped off by big business might make so simplistic an assumption attractive once again, if that were all that *The Water Engine* had to say, David Mamet would be one with Russell Myers, whose *Broom Hilda* comic strip trotted out that folk myth a few Sundays ago. In so far as Mamet is a social playwright—and he certainly sounded like one in the *New York Times* interview on January 15—his concern is with language. His newspaperman, to fill space, dictates a high-sounding paragraph in which the American dream is described in terms of the bargain made and kept. That bargain, on a personal level, delivers Lang to the lawyers and the convivial language of one, the menacing rationality of the other finally destroy him.

As soon as *The Water Engine* can be seen in terms of the bargain as controlilng metaphor, its relation to *American Buffalo*, Mamet's best play, becomes clear. *American Buffalo* is ostensibly about three men in a junk shop who almost commit a burglary, but it is really about the way personal relationships are sacrificed to social attitudes and the language that reflects and creates them. Whatever it is that holds Don and Bob together—friendship, affection, a surrogate father-son

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A Literary Harvest.

Here are the 35 nominees, in seven categories, for The 1978 National Book Awards.

Biography & Autobiography

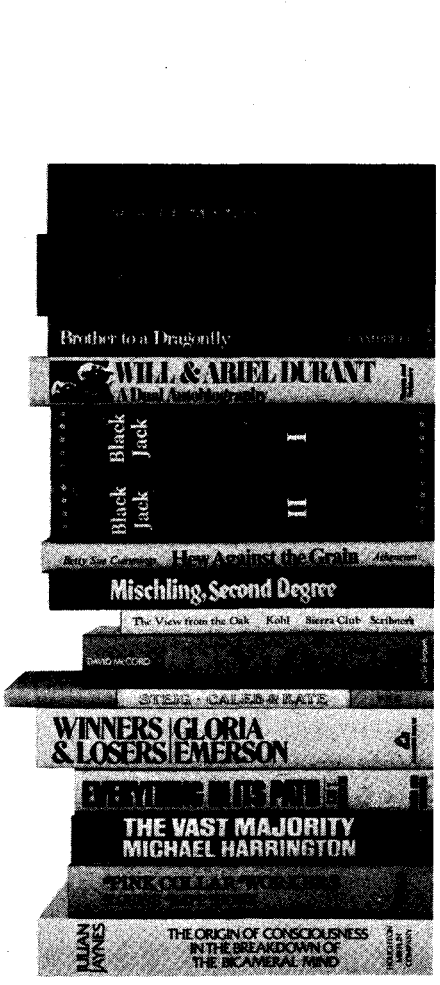
James Atlas/Delmore Schwartz/ Farrar, Straus & Giroux
W. Jackson Bate/ Samuel Johnson/ Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
Will D. Campbell/Brother to a Dragonfly/Continuum/Seabury
Will & Ariel Durant/A Dual Autobiography/Simon & Schuster
Frank E. Vandiver/Black Jack/ Texas A&M Univ. Press

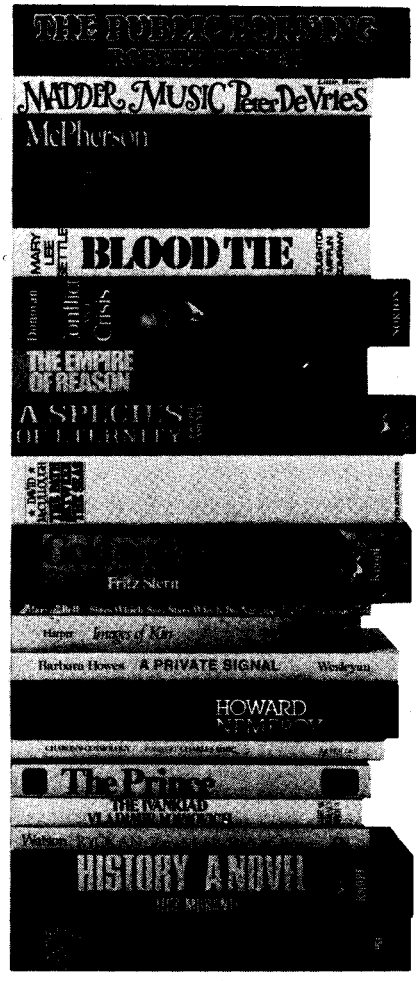
Children's Literature

Betty Sue Cummings/Hew Against the Grain/Atheneum
Ilse Koehn/Mischling, Second Degree/Greenwillow/Morrow
Judith & Herbert Kohl/ The View from the Oak/ Sierra Club/Scribner's
David McCord/One At A Time/ Little, Brown
William Steig/Caleb & Kate/ Farrar, Straus & Giroux

Contemporary Thought

Gloria Emerson/Winners & Losers/Random House
Kai T. Erikson/Everything In Its Path/Simon & Schuster
Michael Harrington/The Vast Majority/Simon & Schuster
Louise Kapp Howe/Pink Collar Workers/G.P. Putnam's Sons
Julian Jaynes/The Origin Of Consciousness In The Breakdown Of The Bicameral Mind/ Houghton Mifflin





Fiction

Robert Coover/The Public Burning/The Viking Press/ A Richard Seaver Bk.
Peter De Vries/Madder Music/ Little, Brown
James Alan McPherson/Elbow Room/Atlantic/Little, Brown
John Sayles/Union Dues/ Atlantic/Little, Brown
Mary Lee Settle/Blood Tie/ Houghton Mifflin

History

Henry Steele Commager/ The Empire of Reason/ Anchor Press/Doubleday
Robert J. Donovan/Conflict and Crisis/W. W. Norton
Joseph Kastner/A Species Of Eternity/Alfred A. Knopf
David McCullough/The Path Between the Seas/Simon & Schuster
Fritz Stern/Gold and Iron/ Alfred A. Knopf

Poetry

Marvin Bell/Stars Which See, Stars Which Do Not See/Atheneum
Michael S. Harper/Images of Kin/ Univ. of Illinois Press
Barbara Howes/A Private Signal/ Wesleyan Univ. Press
Howard Nemerov/The Collected Poems/Univ. of Chicago Press
Charles Simic/Charon's Cosmology/George Braziller

Translation

Robert M. Adams/Niccolo Machiavelli's, The Prince/ W. W. Norton & Co.
David Lapeza/Vladimir Voinovich's, The Ivankiad/ Farrar, Straus & Giroux
Burton Watson/Ryokan: Zen Monk-Poet of Japan/ Columbia Univ. Press
William Weaver/Elsa Morante's History, A Novel/Alfred A. Knopf
Richard & Clara Winston/ Uwe George's, In The Deserts Of This Earth/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

Awards to be presented at Carnegie Hall, on April 12, 1978.

The 1978 National Book Awards

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attachment—it is endangered with the entrance of Teach, who wants to replace Bob in the planned burglary and who makes his case by restating the rules of sound business procedure in the rhythms of the street. The important thing about *American Buffalo* as a play and as a social comment is not that it equates business and burglary (shades of Brecht!) or that the violence implicit in Teach finally surfaces, but that Mamet's understanding of the nuances of ordinary speech lets us see the way societal platitudes invade everyday language and bring along the impulse toward and justifications for destructive action. As Mamet told Ross Wetzsteon (*The Village Voice*, July 5, 1976), "words *create* behavior." In his *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, the language dictates the attitudes of the characters and wrecks any chance of their sexual or personal fulfillment. *The Water Engine*, which is one with the other Mamet plays in tonal rightness, uses the artificial language of radio to emphasize the distance between rhetoric and reality. The other plays—particularly *American Buffalo* and *Sexual Perversity*—understand that rhetoric can be reality.

The serious implications of *The Water Engine* may have got a little lost amid the quiche and coffee at the Theater Cabaret, but its theatrical virtues made it a hit. Late in February it moved uptown to the Plymouth. Perhaps it will take on depth in its new setting, but I rather suspect it will dwindle to packaged nostalgia. After all, Broadway is the range on which *American Buffalo* died while *Dracula* and *Annie* flourish.

GERALD WEALES

Editor's Note: Mr. Weales' prediction proved accurate. The Water Engine *closed shortly after moving uptown.*

ROBERT BEUM

A HOUSE ON THE FREEWAY

The world was down there
from the clouds and pigeons
of murmuring gables,

the clear and shadowy grain
of still oak that holds—
floor, stairway, and sill . . .

What the bulldozers push
is rooms I woke in, the boards
I kept the years in,

the windows to Rapunzel's hair
and the first rainbows . . .
the only homes are the years.

THE SCREEN

Man, I'm tellin' ya, this dude Smokey in the flick *Blue Collar*—the cat that's played by this here Yaphet Kotto—this dude is what I mean *BAAAAD*. He's a ex-con-razor-totin'-mother-grabber who's workin' out in Motown now, drivin' around in the biggest Pimpmobile you ever saw, throwin' coke parties and gettin' broads for his married friends Zeke and Jerry. (These two is played, respectfully, by Richard Pryor and Harvey Keitel.) The killer 'bout this dude Smokey, though, is that he comes on real heavy with the so-called "American Dream." I mean, what is the American Dream? Workin'-class folks in this country used to dream that they was gonna be taken up into heaven, but they got over that. And 'cause they got over it, the honkies got 'em to believin' they was gonna be taken up into the middle class instead, which was supposed to be as good as heaven anyway. So now that's the American Dream, ain't it? Only trouble with this here dream is, like the grunts in Nam used to say most ever time they was given an order, "Ain't never gonna happen, Sir." But this boy Smokey still a true believer anyhow, even though he ain't hardly the type dude the honkies had in mind for this sainthood.

Look-a-here now what I'm tellin' ya 'bout this boy. When him, Zeke and Jerry robs the safe down to their union hall, they gets an account book instead o' the ready cash they's after. And they gets their ass in grass, too, 'cause the union doo-dahs want that book back the worst way there is. Zeke is all over usin' the book to expose corruption in the union, so's "Knuckles" Johnson, the head of their local, will get throwed out. But Smokey, who's a little hipper than his brothers, since he's been in slam, unloads on Zeke's idea with both barrels. In the first place, he says, "Everything they do—the way they pit the lifers against the new boys, the old against the young, the black against the white—is meant to keep us in our place." And in the second place, Smokey says, Zeke oughtn't to be "talking about what you're gonna do to somebody else. Think about what you can do for yourself." To hear Smokey tell it, the thing to use that account book for ain't reform: it's blackmail.

Now, if that ain't the American Dream in a nutshell, I don't know what is. First the dude talks about how all us blue-collar brothers got to stick together. I mean, when he starts in on how "they" pit black against white, he's into what the Reuther brothers, and all of them old Lefties, used to call "workin'-class solidarity." But then in the next breath Smokey talkin' 'bout becomin some kind o' *entrepreneur* or something. He thinks he's

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gonna get out o' his financial "place" he's bein' kept in by usin' that account book as a little nest egg that's gonna pay him interest. This jive dream o' becomin' some middle-class fat cat is what the workin' class always gets hung up on in this country. As soon as some dude figures out what it really means to be a worker, like Smokey does, he wants to be a capitalist instead. Smokey may not know it, but what with that Pimpmobile of his and his get-rich-quick blackmail scheme, he's capitalism's main man.

So this flick is goin' around given capitalism a bad rap. Leastways, that's one thing it's doin' gonna get it in trouble, 'cause capitalism don't work out too good for Smokey. He gets blowed away by it. How's everybody gonna stick together, like he says they ought, if it's each man for himself and dog-eat-dog and all like that, like he also says? He puts them two sayin's together like it was the most natural thing in the world, when truth is they's a gap between 'em the size o' a elevator shaft. 'Stead o' the elevator ride, he gets the shaft. But give ol' Smokey fair dues. Whiles he may be the one full o' this crap about only just lookin' out for yourself, he's also the only one don't take his own advice. It ain't just that he spends his bread on coke parties for Zeke and Jerry, neither. It's heavier than that. Like the night he finds out two union funkies is plannin' to terrorize Jerry's wife while Jerry's off workin'. When these clowns sneak into Jerry's house, who do they find but Smokey, with a baseball bat. He gets 'em out in the yard and teaches 'em how to jitterbug layin' down.

But it ain't because Smokey goes around hittin' on union gorillas that Knuckles gets him wasted. It's 'cause Knuckles figures Smokey to be the only one o' the three who'll really stick it to him with that account book, and at loan shark prices. It's for damn sure Zeke and Jerry ain't no sweat. Comes a time in this flick when we find each o' them stranded out in the middle of his very own bridge somewhere. The bridge Zeke's on is the overpass type that's got cyclone fencin' from one side right over the top to the other. It's like bein' in a cage, which is 'bout right since Zeke's out there tryin' to make a deal with Knuckles. Bit later Jerry's on his bridge, which is the one connectin' Detroit city with Canada, to talk to a dude from the F.B.I. Really Zeke and Jerry's on the same bridge, though. They both tryin' to bridge that same gap that Smokey fell down in. Both is caught in the middle half way between the rock and the hard place.

The hip thing here is that you can't really put these dudes down for the mess they in. This is why this flick turns you every which-a-way but loose. At the end Zeke and Jerry is at each other's throats, and suddenly here comes the voice o' Smokey out o' nowhere tellin' us again how "they" pit black against white and all. Heavy, heavy. All the same, the best stuff in the flick don't come in no big scene like that. It's in your little in-between scene, like when Jerry's kid needs braces on her teeth, or the man from the Interminable Retinue zaps Zeke for deductin' more kids than he's got. It's on account o' hassles like this that these dudes decide to rob a safe. The message writ real small here is the same as is writ large when Smokey gets iced. It's that capitalism don't work, plain and simple.

There's another little scene like this that may be the most laid-back thing in this flick. It's when Zeke goes in to see Knuckles with a grievance before anybody's even thought o' robbin' no safe or nothin'. The problem is that Zeke's locker don't work. But before he can lay that on Knuckles, Zeke gets all haired off in general 'bout what a drag it is tryin' to get by workin' on a assembly line. "It ain't wages," Zeke blurts out there at one point, "It's the prices"—and Knuckles begins to look kind o' worried. "So what do you want me to do?" Knuckles asks Zeke real friendly like, but like he's afraid Zeke'll tell him, too. I want you to get my locker fixed, Zeke says, 'cause he can't think o' nothin' else to say. Knuckles looks real relieved at that, the way people usually does when they gets a suspended sentence. Truth to tell, though, what's goin' down right this minute with Knuckles and Zeke—that's what this whole flick turns out to be about when Zeke, Jerry and Smokey gets ahold o' that account book. It's about what happens when you stumble on the truth, and then don't know what to do with it.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

WILLIAM P. SULLIVAN

STORM WARNING

When wind stirs water
And the wind is strong,
The deeps slumber on
Till the wind be long.

If the wind be long
And the basin shallow,
At length the deeps
Will wave and wallow.

When over me gusts
Of your tempest break,
O soul, consider
This narrow lake.

Do not mistake
For the sea profound
A tranquil surface
So lightly bound.

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BLESS ME, FATHER. . . .

BERNARD McCABE

Transatlantic Blues
WILFRID SHEED
Dutton, $9.95

Pendrid Chatworth, or, as he is renamed in real TV life, Monty Chatworth, is a bit of a devil. As a much-praised, triple-Emmy-award-winning spellbinder in both England and the U.S. he has had plenty of scope for working at the seven deadly sins. Not much Sloth, perhaps, but lots of Pride. He has made his name as the Thinking Man, Mr. Literacy, "the conscience of television," in that Frosty-Cavetty world of "one-inch foreheads where the two-inch forehead is king," and some of the time he is ashamed about it. So in the marvelous drunken opening chapter of this excellent novel we meet him staggering about the first-class cabin of a New York-London jet clamoring for a confessor. Nobody wants the job so he turns on Father Sony, his tape-recorder. Most of the book, then, is a series of dramatized monologues, Chatworth in mid-life and mid-Atlantic, singing and recording his look-back blues.

Like his creator, Chatworth is the child of two cultures. He has left England at 12, during the War, for a Catholic prep school in New Jersey, returned to England at 16 to have an "education" quickly crammed into him, then back to the States for a year of Catholic college, and back again to Oxford for three years. Faced with postwar life in Old England he opts for America, becomes a West Coast disk-jockey, gets into TV, and is now in the jet-set big-time. His constant transatlantic jettings are a speeded-up version of what his nomad life has been since childhood.

This life has made him a permanent exile, given him full-time foreignness. And he has made his career of it by exploiting a sort of reverse chameleon effect; "the moment he stepped off the plane he became the country he had left." He is now a fully corrupt success; but there has been a "bloody apprenticeship," as a naive super-English schoolboy among hostile little Irish-Americans, a child gently terrorized into mimicry of his hosts, as a strident American adolescent awkwardly using his new talent amid the "aching, grinding flippancies" of the upper-class London young, and as a multi-voiced opportunist playing variations on each national role before an audience of bored Oxford undergraduates. A quick study, with a "passion for assimilation," he learns two languages and two cultures as fast and as superficially as he crams himself into Oxford. He becomes in fact a perfect candidate for a Transatlantic TV career, a career based on the deceptions of his voice. This voice business, with its compromises and velleities, is a symbolic as well as real version ("my voice is my confession") of all the other human deceptions and betrayals that lie heavily on his soul and are the main subject of his story.

Chatworth's voice, shrewd, sardonic, reductive—he is on to himself and on to everybody else—presents the Anglo-American scene, and particularly the Catholic scene, afresh. With that education, and stemming as he does from an upright father whose ancient family is stately-homed English Catholic and from an O'Grady mother who is sister under the skin to Catholic Dublin his viewpoint is sharply idiosyncratic. Class plays its usual murky role, and Chatworth's voice reaches new levels of satirical irony as he confronts and rings the changes on all the traps of American anglophilia and anglophobia, of English pro- and anti-Americanism. The voice gets sharper still as yet another excruciating Catholic struggle with sex is rehearsed. Cheerfuller comedy comes in his account of self-prostitution for the media. Chatsworth is too "vibrantly superficial" to engage in the trapped masochisms of a Mauriac or Greene protagonist; he is too buoyant for the sin of Despair. Yet the poles of his confession are self-hatred ("I satirize myself, a Catholic vice"), and self-esteem (once starved, but now well-fed by his audiences), and it becomes clear as his brilliant nervous gabble goes on that a more or less desperate search for a self is involved (as elsewhere in Sheed) with a real fear that once the onion is peeled away there will be nothing left.

For these are exercises in contrition as well as confession. Chatworth does not want psychiatrist couch stuff; sin is real. It is not only that, with his carefree TV specials on the world's trouble spots, he has publicly sinned against sincerity and authenticity. These true confessions provide a history of crushing private failures as well: failing his father and sister at crucial moments in their lives for example, or dishonestly wielding his thin Catholicism as a twisted weapon against his disturbingly honest lover (a brilliant chapter of dark comedy tells that story), and of course, failing himself, notably in relation to his father, who quietly dominates his conscience with his distant challenge of love. All these are failures of love, and a great success in this novel is the balanced way in which sympathies are involved; lover, wife, sister and father have their exploitative failings too.

But wit is the general solvent. Chatworth's ultimate ironic blasphemy, for instance, is to use his light Catholic training, his "spiritual insights" to get ahead in his TV shows, becoming a kind of public father confessor: "That was sort of like going to confession"

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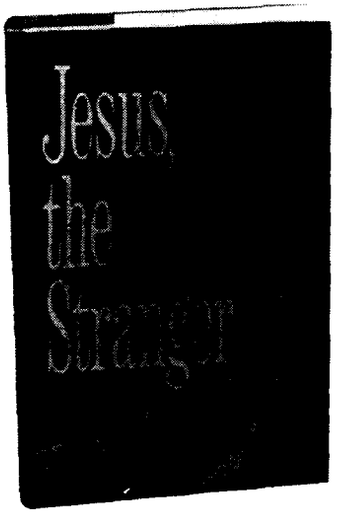
gushes a prominent actress, after one of his "probing" interviews. Wit is never set adrift from feeling, though. In the most poignant moments it still controls feeling. I think here of Kingsley Amis, who from the English end, in *I Want It Now* (about a TV personality) and in *One Fat Englishman* (about transatlantic encounters) has profitably explored somewhat similar territory. Amis also uses satirical wit to explore feeling. Yet (and there is a large issue here about secular and nonsecular habits of mind) at the crucial moment he is likely to lower the cruel sword and let sentiment in. Sheed never lets this happen. The insistent hardmouthed control ("When the M.C. called me a wit with a heart, I broke into that silly grin again and it wouldn't go away") only underlines the novel's seriousness of purpose.

The last chapters make the point. As he completes his tapes Chatworth knows that, at the height of his success, he is on the brink of decline; in twenty years time he will be "a trivia question; and then if I still haven't taken the hint and died, nothing at all." The novel ends in serious black comedy. On a sort of private secular retreat in New Jersey he plays all his tapes to a young ex-nun, a visiting journalist. Baring his soul to her he also bares his body and in a climactic passage, with Father Sony still working away, with his dead father (expert in primal scenes) there in spirit, and perhaps his quick-witted sister hinted at in Sister Veronica, a Mailer-ish procreation takes place. With whiffs of incense and incest wafting around Chatworth is reborn and reconciled. Or to use a more restrained Catholic formula, he has made a good confession. More than that, he has accepted the necessary penance of paternity and matrimony, absolution is at hand; he is in some sort of state of grace, "until" as his last words inexorably remind us, "the next time."

Sheed is better than ever in this novel, and funnier. Hard to single out examples, but I'll recommend the accurately savage encounters Chatworth has with an awful American TV journalist and another with an awful English Underground newsman. Sheed is uniquely expert at playing one dialect's incongruities off against its transatlantic opposite—though my wrinkled ear did catch a few slips. And, as for a moment I'm carping, "Father Sony"—the name—sounds a mistaken bit of whimsy to me. But it's no problem. There's another problem that really isn't a problem either. In earlier books, dealing with his hacks and squares and rightly always looking for a laugh, Sheed has never cared much about cultivating a detailedly consistent point of view. Never mind. It doesn't matter. It never caused insoluble difficulties. By contrast in this complex novel the flashbacks and flashforwards the rapid sceneshifts and timeshifts, the movement from historic present to real present as we nip in and out of Chatworth's personality at various ages—in short the general jet-laggery—generates an atmosphere in which the fusion of past and present attitudes, of



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naiveté and sophistication, of confused half-lost boy and raddled successful middle-aged man, brings Chatworth to life in extraordinarily effective ways, a triumph of the Sheed method.

The book has other subjects not touched on here. It's a novel about language and a novel about the artist's predicaments as well as a novel about modern England and America and the Catholic Church and the media and love and death and a lot of other things. It's Sheed's best so far, and has to be read. To borrow Chatworth's vocabulary, Shazam! Or, if you are flying the other way, Super.

"I Gave Them a Sword": Behind the Scenes of the Nixon Interviews

DAVID FROST

Morrow, $9.95

The Ends of Power

H.R. HALDEMAN with JOSEPH DIMONA

Times Books, $12.95

ROBERT L. KING

These books should be required reading for anyone who believes that the pardon of Richard Nixon was, in Gerald Ford's words, "the right thing to do." Although Ford claimed "to firmly shut and seal this book," his pardon brought forth the Frost interviews and book, and *The Ends of Power* resulted from Haldeman's distress over the interviews.

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> *That was one of the historic Nixon tendencies. When he dissembled, he dissembled in all areas at once, partially and totally. The words were attached to each other at random. Inconsistencies didn't bother him at all, not even inconsistencies in the same or consecutive sentences.*
>
> —"I Gave Them A Sword"

Writing the book has evidently sharpened Haldeman's memory. When Sam Dash asked who suggested that Haldeman listen to one of the tapes after his resignation, he replied, "I am not sure whether I did or whether the President did," nor could he remember the date on which he played it (although his questioners thought that the date was very important). Now, he can be more precise:

> Noting the Senator's interest in that September 15 conversation, I knew what to expect. When I re-returned to Washington preparatory to testifying, Nixon called me and asked me if I could review the September 15 tape, too, which I did on July 10.

Haldeman also testified that he chose resignation as "better" and "proper," while in his book he frequently tells us that he opposed resigning and favored a leave of absence.

Since Haldeman is a convicted perjurer, raising these inconsistencies may seem petty, but *The Ends of Power* asks us to accept, among other things, his reconstruction of the 18½ minute gap. We must, then, decide which Haldeman to believe—the one who testified that listening to one tape "confirmed" his memory but did not add "a great deal," or the one who now needs "new evidence" to tell us how the missing conversation with Nixon "might have gone."

It goes, by the way, to Nixon's suspicions that Charles Colson was behind the break-in. But, when Nixon says that the gap was innocuous and when Haldeman fills it in to flesh out a private theory, the question comes down to trust—a trust that such men as these could earn only under cross-examination.

Without some test, we cannot really accept the book's most challenging assertions: that the Soviets asked us to join them in a "surgical" nuclear strike against China, that Nixon ordered the break-in, and that the CIA allowed it to fail. We can, however, reply to some of the nonsense:

—Neither the press nor the Nixon-haters caused Watergate or obstructed justice. If some people actively enjoyed seeing Nixon in trouble, that's irrelevant.

—If ending the war, reorganizing the bureaucracy and other circumstances kept the good guys in the White House from dealing with Watergate, then they must take responsibility for those other circumstances that created an atmosphere for fall-guy Colson to thrive in.

—Whether Jack Kennedy swore, LBJ taped, or Teddy broke the sixth commandment, has nothing to do with the validity of the charges against Nixon.

—The "relative importance of Watergate" cannot be known by measuring reels of tape or by the bulk of Haldeman's notes on other matters. By that logic, Adam and Eve could have saved Eden for us by showing God all the fruit they didn't eat.

Much of Haldeman's case could not withstand the distinction between motive and intent that David Frost turned on Nixon. Frost's list of what the public record reveals is also impressive; his glosses of some of Nixon's remarks are penetrating and exact.

Perhaps most impressive is James Reston Junior's research because it produced three previously unpublished exchanges between Nixon and Colson —all three pointing to an early cover-up. Frost sprung this material on a surprised Nixon to break through his well-lacquered façade, and it worked. For these and other reasons, Frost can justly claim to have done something worthwhile; he did, after all, skill-

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fully extract damning statements from Nixon: "I would have to say that a reasonable person could call that a cover-up" and "When the President does it, that means that it is not illegal."

Because of the pardon, Frost's commercial forum had to stand for the courtroom. Although he produced a better record than many expected, the success of the interviews is disturbing because, however well he and his staff prepared, the values and demands of show business defined the limits of their approach.

As a result, the opening chapters of *"I Gave Them A Sword"* could be sub-titled "The Romance of the Dollar" as we follow Frost jetting around the world, raising money for his project, lunching in the right places. As he approaches the interviews themselves, the focus is sharper; the book, nicely paced. Even here, however, Frost must be concerned with his package; he could not be a driving adversary in an early session without ruining the mood and jeopardizing the whole project. Significantly, the two staffs congratulated Nixon, Frost and themselves after the Watergate taping.

Worse, Frost's instincts led him to aim for an emotional high point, not for an exhaustive truth. With Nixon weakening (on obstruction of justice), Frost says, "Had it not been for the obvious anguish that Nixon was experiencing, I would have been sorely tempted to return to the harder line," and of another moment, "Whatever the explanation, the emotion was real." A lawyer, of course, would go for the harder line and for the "real" explanation.

Frost, finally, has absorbed the current view of Watergate as "tragedy." He speaks of Nixon's "catharsis," and of being "close . . . to the sort of purging statement that both history and justice required." Haldeman speaks of being "brought low" by the "tragedy." Virtually every commentator on Watergate has similarly accepted some form of this debased, pop-art view of recent history. Maybe it's just a verbal crutch for some, but the total effect of the usage is to turn a political crisis into a completed fiction, beyond reach and beyond thought.

That's why it's important to keep replying to the tired arguments of the Laskys, Safires, Prices and Haldemans. With Nixon's book due in May, we can't let the simple repetition of absurdities wear us down. San Clemente has been opened for a fund-raising bus tour (for charity, to be sure); numbered, autographed copies of the memoirs are being made available for a regal fee. Each book, each courtly gesture, gives new stature to the man who went "through a life" for David Frost, who has "suffered enough" in the eyes of others and who does not deserve public rehabilitation because he will never answer the tough questions in the proper place.

Jesus the Christ

WALTER KASPER

Paulist, $12.95

GERARD S. SLOYAN

This challenging volume is an updated version of the author's university lectures at the Catholic theological faculties of Muenster and Tuebingen (where he now teaches) and the Gregorian University in Rome, delivered over the last dozen years. The secular-priest author is a professor of dogmatic theology committed to the method of his predecessors Karl Adam and Josep R. Geiselmann, namely, the exploration of the history of biblical and ecclesiastical tradition. The most satisfactory parts of his 275-page volume are, understandably, those that recount the latter from the period of the second century church fathers to modern times. The history of the biblical tradition that he presents is derivative. Kasper does not do his own exegesis but relies on the findings of others. This may be just as well, for although a number of statements throughout lead the reader to suppose that he intends to do his theorizing from the New Testament data, critically examined, he in fact never does so. It is fairly clear that he cannot. Rather, he carefully plots the post-biblical development of Christology (the theology of Jesus as the Christ) in the Greek East and Latin West, and presents a modern understanding of his subject that derives from, and accords with, the conciliar outcomes of those debates. As a result, one receives a careful account of the problems and solutions proper to Nicaea, Ephesus, Chalcedon, and II and III Constantinople.

On the way to it there is a summary of modern German theology, another of the data of the gospels ("Part II. The History and Destiny of Jesus Christ"), and an exploration of the mystery of Jesus under the titles "Son of God" and "Son of Man." In the latter, biblical categories are subordinate to doctrinal. Thus, in a verse-by-verse presentation of the Johannine prologue we read: "Despite the distinction between God and

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Logos, both are united by the one divine nature."

The book is written in the theological shorthand employed by modern Germans and translated by a team that at times seems totally mystified by it. J. Nolte is quoted as having said (by way of radical demythologization, Kasper points out): "Accordingly, the Christ-matter has to be radically relativized and seen merely as an intermediate, didactic and symbolic concretion of a permanent truth-value." Kasper is himself often betrayed, as in: "The time of grace had dawned, but it was a very off-putting dawn . . ."; "In older Catholic writing the Church was often seen as the historical instantiation of the kingdom of God." Much easier to translate, if not to make sense of, is the bold declaration: "Eternal life is God's final definitive act of freedom for man." European theologians dearly love a final definitive act, and they know of quite a few.

Yet if the prose is often gummy and the going heavy, the persevering reader who already knows a great deal about the subject will come upon many a good insight clearly expressed. As to, "This bodily *in-the-worldness* of man and this *in-manness* of the world is so essential and constituent for both, that man would not exist without this real being-in-the-world and conversely the world as such would not exist without this reference to man," one does not know whether to yawn or mail it to *The New Yorker*. Because this solemn declaration is followed by a worthwhile discussion of the relation of the Christian hope in eternal life to respect for this world, one does neither.

The book has an academic lecture-hall quality which is its strength and its weakness. As part of the latter, something must be said on everything. Careful treatises of 500 pages end up in lists of names, categorized as tendencies or schools. Conversely, use of the book's index on Anselm, Hegel, or Barth will yield clear summaries of their Christology or the way their overall thought-world encompassed a Christology. While the author dialogues at length with a few positions he dismisses others with a brief and inadequate characterization. On balance, he renders a service more than he offends.

Kasper is a functionalist in his Christology who sees the necessity of asking ontological questions. He pays adequate attention to the fact that Jesus is believed by Christians to be the savior of humanity, its reconciler with God; yet he also probes into who Jesus is that he can do this. The net effect of the inquiry is disconcerting. The patristic and conciliar statements about Jesus as the Christ that won out are presented as if nothing better could have been hoped for. When the same truth of faith is presented in modern existential or phenomenological language, it is as if nothing from the past needs to yield. The demythologization of the conciliar and creedal language is not only done without strain. There is no notice given to the reader that it needs to be done. Indeed, the opposite is insinuated throughout (so that there will be no summonses to Rome to interrupt theological progress?).

To be specific, Kasper thinks that the studied compromise of Chalcedon between the Monophysite and Nestorian positions, which confessed one and the same Christ in two natures, "both concurring into one person and one hypostasis," was not basically reinterpreted by the declaration of II Constantinople. He speaks cryptically of the "extremely unfortunate circumstances" of that decision of 553, and, in a masterpiece of understatement, describes it as "to some extent a subject of controversy even today." Yet II Constantinople incorporated fully the Neo-Chalcedonianisms of the Cyril party by stating that the one *hypostasis* is that of the *Logos* into which the human nature is assumed. Certainly Chalcedon could have said this and certainly it took the pains not to. Kasper is justified in crediting Cyril with "the brilliant idea of the hegemony of the *Logos*," as with pointing out the concerns of the East

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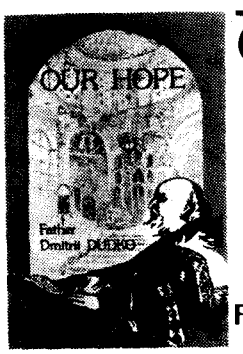
that Pope Leo I, the architect of the Chalcedonian compromise, may not have been sensitive to. Still, to call II Constantinople's interpretation of Chalcedon "legitimate and logical" is not to reckon with the practical monophysite Christology which has been the legacy of popular Christianity ever since. III Constantinople preserved the two distinct wills in Christ, it is true. But the concept of a human being who is not a human person—that function being more than adequately fulfilled by a divine person, the *Logos*—is a subtlety with which most Christains have not been able to cope. They understandably settle for a Christology of God in a human body (heretical, but never reprimanded in human memory) or else discover a much different Jesus in the gospels and the epistle to the Hebrews and no longer give credence to what they thought was the demand of Catholic/Orthodox faith.

Piet Schoonenberg has done much better than Kasper allows in facing the problems created by the Neo-Chalcedonian "orthodoxy." The German theologian sets aside the work of the Dutch one as a reversal of the Chalcedonian formula and consequently a departure from its context. But what Schoonenberg has done is interpret Chalcedon in a New Testament rather than a Cyrillian spirit, thereby saving it for usefulness to a modern purpose. For him the "one person and one hypostasis" of the definition is the man Jesus of Nazareth. His nature is human by definition. He is also divine because God through his Word, *not* a second person in Christ, manifests himself as fully in this man as the limitations of creaturehood allow. That this is a modalist Christology and not the three distinct *hypostaseis* ("persons") of Cyrillian clarity Schoonenberg admits. He makes clear that while Sabellius and the other monarchian modalists were rightly repudiated, the only presence of God in Christ and in the world through the Spirit taught by the New Testament is one that suggests two distinct modes of presence of the one indivisible godhead. That God must be such in himself as to allow of this expression, which is personal in the case of Christ and by analogy of the Spirit also, is abundantly clear. But it is not so clear to Schoonenberg that an eternally thrice-distinct godhead as to "persons" is a demand of the New Testament data. Nor to this reviewer.

Kasper is so vigorous in maintaining the inadequacy of various modern Christologies, Catholic and Protestant, that he cannot but disappoint in presenting his own. What he proposes is acceptable enough, so far as it goes. "God reveals himself in Jesus Christ unreservedly and definitively as the one who he is: God is love (1 Jn 4:8, 16). . . . If God then reveals himself in Jesus Christ . . . as love communicating itself, God's self-communication between the Father and Son is the eternal nature of God himself [viz., unfathomable and inexplicable love]." Kasper holds that the Cyrillian doctrine of the hypostatic union is ultimately a conceptual, ontological expression of the biblical statement that God has manifested himself as love. He writes: "Precisely because Jesus is no other than the *Logos*, in the *Logos* and through him he is also a human person." Aquinas, Scheeben, and Alfaro are then quoted, correctly enough; but in support of that proposition, which presumably they might have trouble agreeing to.

Kasper concludes by presenting his Christology of the Spirit in the last twenty pages. He promises to get away from the difficulties inherent in scholastic theology and more recent Hegelian readings of it by hewing to the New Testament texts that link the incarnation to the work of the Spirit. The outcome is various. Joined to the indisputable fact of the Spirit's action in the world as the precondition of the person and work of Jesus are a dozen ringing propositions that are thoroughly debatable. Thus we read: "In this all-consuming dedication to the point of death, the Spirit as it were becomes free; he is released from this particular historical figure, and consequently Jesus's death and resurrection mediate the coming of the Spirit (cf. Jn 16.7; 20.22)." This fanciful prose occurs in the midst of some unexceptionable readings of various New Testament passages.

Kasper's book is thoroughly sexist in its language. It also wrongly sup-



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ROBERT PHILLIPS's Lewis Carroll study, *Aspects of Alice*, has recently been reissued in a Vintage paperback edition.

JAMES R. KELLY teaches sociology at Fordham University.

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poses that God's firm and final offer in Jesus Christ was "rejected by Israel as a whole" (pp. 78, 102, 121). He nonetheless points the way to a careful Spirit Christology, which we have a right to expect soon from some other hand. Perhaps Schoonenberg's.

IN BRIEF

DEATHWORK, *by James McLendon, J.B. Lippincott Co., $8.95.*

Son of a senior prison official and raised on the grounds of the Florida State Prison at Raiford, author James McLendon has created a harrowing novel on the subject of crime and capital punishment. So rooted in reality and telling details, the book makes Capote's *In Cold Blood* seem slight. McLendon compresses into a four-hour period the histories, thoughts and emotons of the various participants whose lives intersect at the time of electrocuting four criminals: the prison officials, the warden, the electrician, the executioner, the chief corrections officer, the governor, the reporters, and of course the four who are chosen, after a long suspension of capital punishment, to die for their crimes.

McLendon writes with extreme objectivity. And while he has no particular thesis to prove, he manages to communicate the sleazy political machinations behind such an execution. Through the mind and mouth of one of the condemned, he also allows the reader to perceive that often criminals are well-meaning human beings with a tragic flaw. The novel is full of other psychological perceptions, as when another of the condemned communicates that the criminal mind is capable of shutting off the valve of remorse; no one on Death Row thinks about his victims, apparently: ". . . that was a realm of the psyche that the mind of the condemned could not handle, and so it could be shut off. But the valve of fear . . . could not be shut off."

The novel creates (or, almost certainly, re-creates—all the characters seem so firmly rounded in some Floridian penal reality) a gallery of memorable characters, especially Cabel Lasseter, the decent, conscience-stricken electrician, and David Housely, the empty-emotioned volunteer executioner. McLendon, the author of two books of non-fiction, makes very few mistakes in his first novel. (The most glaring is his putting, quite improbably, into the mouth of Lincoln Daniels, a reporter-novelist, the complete history of American electric chair executions —material which frames and nourishes the novel, but which should have been treated as narrative.)

But there can be no doubt this is a powerful—one is feebly tempted to say "electrifying"—novel. It is, perhaps, *too* powerful. The language is so direct, the scenes so graphic, the smells and agonies so pungent, the final death watch may be too much for many.

ROBERT PHILLIPS

A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED, *by E. F. Schumacher, Harper & Row, $6.95.*

Rabbi Abraham Heschel often told a story about a kingdom in which it was discovered that the grain crop had somehow been poisoned so that anyone who ate the harvested wheat went insane. The wise king faced an impossible dilemma of choosing between widespread famine or madness, as there was not enough food available from other places to feed the population. "All right," the king decided, "let us eat it. But at the same time we must feed a few people on a different diet so that there will be among us some who remember that we are insane."

The very different economist E. F. Schumacher, who also wrote *Small Is Beautiful,* has absorbed such unfashionable intellectual fare as the gospels, Buddha, Sts. Augustine and Thomas, Blaise Pascal, and Etienne Gilson, and, as the king in the fable required, he now warns us of the several insane and inane postulates of contemporary culture: That technological and economic growth will save us from our deepest social and cultural problems; that work is a "disutility"; that a mature economy must first look for "efficiency," however narrowly defined; and that large scale and centralized organizations represent an inevitable stage of human progress.

Schumacher's message here is a simple one: Do not be fooled; do not think that modern natural and social science has rendered ancient religious and philosophical truths superfluous to our lives and to our culture. To the extent, he writes, that contemporary social science, which he calls the "descriptive sciences," apes the natural sciences, the "instructional sciences" concerned with prediction and control, the perennial questions of human wisdom and happiness will be treated as "subjective" and therefore scientifically otiose. In this book he even speaks about "higher forces" such as love and empathy. In a meditative chapter entitled "Two Types of Problems" he expresses admiration for the person who coined the slogan of the French Revolution because "To the pair of opposites, *Liberté* and *Egalité,* irreconcilable in ordinary logic, he added a third factor or force— *Fraternité,* brotherliness—which comes from a higher level."

In the first chapter of *A Guide for the Perplexed* Schumacher recalls a tourist map of Leningrad which left out several churches which were plainly in his sight and he comments that this was not the first time in his life he had been given a map which failed to show many of the things that seemed to be of the greatest importance to the conduct of his life. He is referring to the cognitive maps manufactured by universities. His own book represents

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not a new scientific map but a classical invitation to respect religious genius and philosophical insight. Readers familiar with these classical texts will not be struck by the content of the book but by the nourishment this social scientist receives from them and his admirable refusal to bracket scientific knowledge from human wisdom. That his recent work has been labeled by many social scientists as "arational" and "cultist" merely shows how far the classical notion of rationality has been impoverished.

E. F. Schumacher died early last year.

JAMES R. KELLY

CORRESPONDENCE

(*Continued from page 227*)

ends up in a comparison of whose are more exquisite or relevant, looking more for pimples than for dimples: whose canvas is broader, whose strokes heavier or lighter, whose subjects more elect.

In the book mentioned, *Mauve Gloves and Madmen, Clutter & Vine*, Wolfe surveys a large part of our contemporary carnival with scathing insights: the military mentality "The Truest Sport," the new pornoviolence, the Me-Decade, hostage-taking as the Perfect Crime, many manners, customs and fads, including the burying of Solzhenitsyn by the media.

His "distant amusing" Powers somewhat deplores is most attractive and revealing to our diverse moral consciences. Have we not enough moral passion? It is mostly our ordinary humbug that Wolfe exposes.

Yes, most writers remain poor and struggling, but Powers surely would not pretend that some are not pretentious, and despite his conclusion grants his points earlier. Perhaps Wolfe avoids some themes (though he has done so less than anyone else in the range of his debunking) because he loves his life style too much. Is that avoidance not the fault of us all?

PASCHAL BAUTE

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

Abigail McCarthy (con't)

But I am puzzled a bit about the candidate. He is always shown half-face as he talks to these varied citizens of Arizona. When he is seen full-face, it is always in a long shot so that it is difficult to see his face clearly. What is wrong with his face? Does he perhaps look shifty, untrustworthy, un-Arizonan, when close up?

The scenes are interspersed with stark black and white pictures of old Arizona. These are shots of sturdy pioneers and wide dusty Main Streets. Current issues like the need for fuel are led into by pictures of the beginning of change like the coming of the first automobiles. It is skillful. It holds interest.

The talk turns to the current concerns of Arizonans. Crime. Pollution. Unemployment. Too many people coming in who don't really want to work.

There is quite a lot of talk about crime. "It looks like what we came here to get away from has caught up with us," says one elderly woman. It's *outside crime*, you see. The skillful cutters and the candidate make that clear. Even sophisticated crime like land fraud, he says, is committed by absentee owners of vast tracts of undertaxed land. Enforcement is weak, even though there are 17,000 *fingerprinted* real estate agents in Arizona. And down on the border in towns like Douglas there's a *real* problem. One man the candidate and his wife met had been robbed *seventeen* times! Of course, it *could* be the work of outside gangs, he interjects silkily, not of the illegal aliens.

How is Arizona to deal with this crime wave? Well Arizonans dealt with their first crime wave . . . the black and white picture on the screen brings me bolt upright in my chair. A man bound hand and feet hangs from a rough gibbet. He still wears his hat, evidence of the haste of mob justice. The voice-over, silky again, disclaims the need for vigilante tactics but stresses firmness, etc. The picture burns in the mind, however, as it was meant to do, and the pleased face of the sombrero man with the tooth pick—on the screen again now—underlines the message. There is more—about the enlargement of the state prisons necessitated by Arizona's new crime laws, about the need to make prisoners raise their own food and work for their keep. . . . Somehow I feel that trespassers other than Mr. Bonanno, reputed head of the Mafia, secure in his villa on a hill in Tucson, are the target of all this. I remember a reporter beaten to death—an outside reporter—in Phoenix.

I snap off the set. It is a good thing that I know more about this beautiful state of red rock and canyons than I have learned tonight.

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